School of Theology at Claremont
1001 1427415

BX
9798
S8
S8

The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

THE STUNDISTS

THE STORY OF A GREAT
RELIGIOUS REVOLT

266

9798
S8
58

THE STUNDISTS

THE STORY OF A GREAT RELIGIOUS REVOLT

INTRODUCTION BY

JOHN BROWN, D.D.

(*Ex-Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales*)

WITH MAP OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA, SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF THE BODY

266

PUBLISHED BY THE
SELF-SUPPORTING LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

150 FIFTH AVENUE, - - NEW YORK

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

PREFACE.

In the second half of last century, and again in the second half of this, Southern Russia has been the scene of wide-spread revolt, the first political, the second religious, both revolts taking place very much in the same latitude, only that one took its rise east of the Volga and the other in the provinces west of that great river. De Quincey, in his own picturesque fashion, has told the story of the first—the revolt of the Kalmuck Tartars in 1771; showing how, because of the oppression of Russia, her pride and haughty disdain towards them, her contempt for their religion, and her determination to reduce them to absolute slavery, this Tartar people, a vast multitude of six hundred thousand souls, burnt their homesteads and started across the wilderness in search of a land of freedom some three thousand miles away.

The great revolt of our own time is that of a people leaving, not the territory, but the religion of the Russian Empire. The story of this second revolt is here told for us with great vividness and power by one who is exceptionally qualified for the task, as being probably better acquainted with the Stundists than any one else who has written about them. It is a story of deepest interest, one that ought to come close home to every Christian heart, and both writer

and publisher are rendering eminent service to the sacred cause of religious freedom and humanity by letting the facts be known far and wide.

Yonder in the neighborhood of Kherson, where our great philanthropist, John Howard, fell before the plague in 1790, and where he lies buried, the Stundist movement took its rise some five and thirty years ago. The cause of its rise is an old and oft-repeated story in the history of Christianity. The official, State-recognized Church had become corrupt, had sunk into worldliness and death; gross immoralities and sensual lives on the part of the clergy had brought religion into uttermost contempt, when, at length, in the most unexpected way the breath of God began to breathe life among the dead. For even a corrupt Church cannot altogether keep God out of His own world or shut Christ out from the souls for which He died.

The Stundist movement, as its name implies, had a German origin. As far back as 1778 the great Empress Catherine had colonized Kherson with peasants from the Suabian land, who brought with them their religion, their pastors, and their industrious, sober ways. For many years national prejudices and the barriers of language kept Russians and Germans apart from each other. But sooner or later true life begins to tell. Men may even doubt the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, but they are seldom found doubting the divine inspiration of consistency of life, unselfishness of spirit, and true brotherly service. Some of the Russian peasants who had been helped in their poverty or ministered to in their sickness by their German neighbors began to attend their services—to keep the *stunden*, or *hours*, of

praise and prayer; they learned to read, were furnished with the New Testament in their own language, and eventually some of them found the deeper blessing of eternal life.

In this simple scriptural fashion this memorable movement began. Men told their neighbors what God had done for their souls, and so the heavenly contagion spread from cottage to cottage, from village to village, and from province to province, till at length the Russian Stundists were found in all the provinces from the boundaries of the Austrian Empire in the West to the land of the Don Cossack in the East, and were supposed to number something like a quarter-of-a-million souls.

The course of this remarkable development of religious life, the eminent men raised up in connection with the movement, the gradual elevation of the people, their opinions and church organization, and the terrible storm of persecution with which they have been assailed—all this and more is strikingly told in the papers that follow. The story reads like one from the records of the primitive Church. The brutal sufferings inflicted on the one side, and the heroic constancy manifested on the other, may well touch every heart among us.

De Quincey says that in the consequences that followed the revolt of the Tartars in 1771 Europe was called to witness the spectacle of a nation in its agony. This is true of the sufferings of the Stundists of to-day, and calls for the indignant protest of every right-feeling man and woman in this Christian land. Stolid and defiant as Russian officialism may seem to be, that protest will not be in vain. M. Pobiedonostyeff, the High Procureur of the Holy Synod,

who is supposed to be responsible for the atrocities described in these pages, may be as blindly fanatical as was Saul of Tarsus, thinking he is doing God service, and he may be all-powerful as an ecclesiastic, but he is not too blind to see the storm signal on our shores or too powerful to feel the force of the indignation of Western Christendom when it is once fairly roused.

Nations are vastly nearer to each other in these days of the Press and of swiftly-flying intelligence than they were a century ago, and even the strongest nation must yield at length to that love of justice and right which, in the last resort, is stronger than battalions and mightier than the edicts of kings. We can all do something to create an enlightened public opinion, and we can all bear these suffering brethren and sisters on our hearts in prayer before God.

JOHN BROWN.

Bedford.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Beginnings	1
II.	Progress	7
III.	Growth	13
IV.	Closing up the Ranks	19
V.	Persecution	25
VI.	Persecution of the Leaders	31
VII.	Some of the Martyrs	36
VIII.	Persecution up to Date	42
IX.	Internal Organization	48
X.	Religious and Social Ideas.—I.	53
XI.	Religious and Social Ideas.—II.	59
XII.	Politico-Social Ideas	64
XIII.	Services	69
XIV.	Present Condition and Future Prospects	74

THE STUNDISTS.

CHAPTER I.

Beginnings.

Not far from the banks of the Boug river, on the softly-undulating steppes of the fertile province of Kherson, stands the insignificant Russian village of Osnova, a collection of low, white cottages, with little farmyards around them, and beyond and on all sides illimitable plains of waving wheat. There are numerous villages not far away, all like Osnova in appearance, with the same people, the same low huts and dirty haggards, and oceans of corn surrounding them, but none so famous, none so interesting to the student of religious history, for here, exactly thirty-five years ago, a great movement first saw the light, a mighty movement that may perhaps revolutionize the whole of the religious and social life of ninety millions of people.

The origin and first beginnings of this movement, which eventually acquired the name of Stundism, are involved in a good deal of uncertainty; but sufficient is known to enable us to form a tolerably accurate notion of the causes which led up to the greatest religious revolt of modern times. These are two-fold—one cause, the utter lifelessness of the Russian Orthodox Church; the other—an external cause—the increased spiritual life among the Germans settled in

numerous colonies over the greater portion of Southern Russia. To get at the real origin of Stundism we must inquire a little into both of these. The Russian Church, which had been galvanized into unhealthy activity by its fratricidal conflict with the Old Believers in the reign of Peter the Great, had, after its victory over these heretics, sunk into utter inanity and empty ceremonialism. Uncontrolled by any effective oversight of their training and conduct, the clergy had ceased to be anything more than dull and extortionate collectors of church fees. They led gross lives of drunkenness and immorality, unredeemed by any spark of religious life. They were despised by the meanest of their flocks, and ignorant to a proverb. Their homes, instead of being models of purity and family concord, had become objects of scorn; and a priest, a priest's wife and children, a priest's farm, a priest's cottage, were synonymous with intemperance, slatternliness, thriftlessness and dirt.

On the other hand, the Russian peasants of the South, a race altogether distinct in sentiment and imagination from the phlegmatic people of the Central and Northern provinces—Little Russians as they are called—had examples before their eyes of men leading upright, God-fearing lives, modeling their conduct on New Testament teachings, cleanly, thrifty, able agriculturists. These were their neighbors, the Germans. The Empress Catherine, who, whatever her faults as a woman, was a great ruler and a far-seeing administratrix, had invited a large number of Suabian peasants, who in their South German homes had been simmering with indignation against the corrupt rule of their time, to settle in her empire on fertile lands, which she measured out to them with no niggard hand. Most of them were members of revived Evangelical communions, deeply impressed with the nearness of the Second Advent, and they readily seized on Catherine's offer, as enabling them to be a stage nearer Jerusalem when that long-expected day should arrive. The

piety, integrity and steadiness which distinguished them in their Würtemberg homes they transplanted to Russia. Out on the steppe they built their trim houses, surrounded them with fruit trees and flower gardens, and carefully tilled their land, raising splendid crops of wheat and barley. They brought their earnest pastors with them, and built commodious churches and schools. Clean and well dressed, they crowded the churches for the numerous services, and the schools were filled with their eager children. The colonies became little paradises on the steppe, and small wonder that the Russian's heart filled with bitterness when he looked on the brightness, purity, harmony and comparative opulence of the strangers' villages, and compared them with the disorder, dirt, drunkenness and discord in his own.

For many years after the arrival of the Germans in Russia, the two peoples kept rigorously aloof from one another; but little by little the stronger race began to acquire an influence over the weaker. The sick Russian would apply to the German apothecary, the impecunious Russian to the German money-lender, the beggars—and there were thousands of them came to the colonies—for alms, and crowds of wandering peasants, discharged soldiers, landless people sought and obtained employment from the affluent German farmers. It was in no stingy or superior way that these German Pietists treated their Russian dependents. The wealthy Russian is in the habit of looking on his poor fellow-countryman as belonging to an inferior order, with wants very similar to the wants of a horse—sufficient food and shelter to keep him able to work. The Germans treated their laborers as men and brothers, and not only attended to their material wants, but sought in every way to improve their moral and spiritual condition.

It was with no deep design to effect a Reformation, no presentiment of what was coming, that the pious farmer, the day's work done, would sit side by side with his Russian workman,

and German New Testament in hand, or book of German hymns, would laboriously translate for his tattered disciple the words of Christ, or the noble spiritual songs of the *Vaterland*. This was the attitude of the Germans in the colony of Rohrbach, a flourishing little place near the River Boug, and not very far from the great commercial city of Odessa. The pastor there was a certain Bonekemper, a man full of zeal, who not only labored for the spiritual welfare of his own Germans, but for the enlightenment of their Russian dependents. He decided on taking two important steps. The Germans were in the habit of meeting together for prayer and praise at stated times. These exercises they called *Stunden*, or "hours." Bonekemper decided to invite the Russian laborers who had acquired a smattering of German to attend the *Stunden*. Here they first heard Protestant worship, and it was their attendance at these services that first earned for them the title of *Stundists*, a title of opprobrium attached to them by the Orthodox priests of the neighborhood. Bonekemper's second step was to procure a supply of Russian New Testaments. These he readily obtained from German and English friends in St. Petersburg. To those of the Rohrbach laborers who promised to learn to read, the energetic pastor made a present of a New Testament. Classes of Russians were formed; Germans taught them to read their own Russ language; writing was added; German tracts were distributed; there was ferment, and stir, and inquiry, and much searching of heart. This was in 1858, a memorable date, for it was the birth-year of Stundism.

A peasant who had been much in Rohrbach was I. Onishenko. He lived in Osnova, a Russian village in the neighborhood, not very far from the port of Nicolaieff. He had been in the employ of various German farmers, and was one of the most devoted of those who attended the German *Stunden*, and one of the most diligent of the students of the New Testament. At this time he was thirty years old, a tall,

meagre man, with childlike blue eyes, a pleasant mouth, and a ready gift of facile speech. Early in 1858 he declared himself converted, and was admitted to membership with the German brethren. Onishenko was, therefore, the first Stundist. Shortly after his conversion he returned to Osnova, and at once began evangelistic work among his fellow villagers. They met in his cottage in crowds, and to them he declared all that he himself knew, all that had worked so complete a reformation in his own heart. His preaching caught on. The state of preparedness was already there; the seed had been already sown.

Onishenko had long singled out for special instruction a remarkable young man, whose gifts both of mind and heart were well known to him. He felt that if he could win young Michael Ratushni to the cause, he would gain one who would devote every energy he possessed to the spreading of the Gospel message. Ratushni was convinced and converted, and together with his teacher he went to Rohrbach to visit Bonekemper, and be received by the German brethren. As far as we can learn Ratushni's visits to Rohrbach were frequent, and there can be no doubt that he here obtained the instruction that was so indispensable in the prominent part he has since occupied as one of the foremost leaders of the Stundist revolt against the Orthodox Church of his country. In the meantime other evangelists, men who did useful and enduring work, but whose names have not been recorded, had been prepared in Rohrbach, Neu-Danzig, and other colonies, and returning to their own villages they spread the light that had illumined their own souls. In two years, or before 1860, there was hardly a Russian hamlet in the neighborhood of Nicolaieff that had not its little company of earnest Stundists, teaching and praying, meeting together either openly or in secret, and zealously carrying forward a work dearer to them than life itself.

We now propose to carry on the history of this extraordinary movement a stage further, and to show how it streamed over the boundary of the province of Kherson into other districts of Russia.

CHAPTER II.

Progress.

We have seen the first beginnings of the Stundist movement in Rohrbach, Osnova, and elsewhere, and two of its greatest leaders, Onishenko and Ratushni, have been introduced to us. These men and their immediate disciples became possessed of an extraordinary desire to travel. As true apostles they desired to spread the light. They tramped from village to village, from townlet to townlet, carrying the message of the Gospel. Peasants in villages far remote from Osnova began to know these itinerating preachers who came to their houses in various guises, generally as pedlars or book-hawkers. The arrival of the traveling evangelist was always an event. A scout had gone before to herald his coming, and from the outlying hamlets peasants flocked to an assigned meeting-place, sometimes a remote cottage, sometimes a sequestered hollow in the steppe. Here the people would learn for the first time in their own language of the wonderful works of God. Those who desired them, bought New Testaments, or rough Russian translations of German hymns in manuscript

In a surprisingly short time the peasants in most districts of the extensive province of Kherson had heard the Gospel preached, and sang with perfect ease queer Russianized versions of "O sacred Head surrounded," "The Lord our God is King," "Lead us, O Father, to the Heavenly gates," and other favorites. Ratushni was indefatigable. When not preaching, he was traveling. In his own province, in all large centres of

population, he had already established fairly-organized communities—places like Elizabethgrad, Odessa, Nicolaieff, and Kherson, and had engaged the powerful support of selected men as presbyters of groups of villages. Vitriashenko was one of the most energetic of these; other able men of this province, who afterwards occupied prominent positions in the progress and development of Stundism, were Zimbal, Gerasim Balaban, Strigoun, Ivanoff, and last, but not least, Ryaboshapka. These men, and many others, kept in constant touch with the German colonists, and were the means of enlisting the active co-operation of several pious Germans—men who added the necessary Teutonic method and balance to the onward march of the impetuous Little Russians.

By degrees, villages in the provinces contiguous to Kherson were visited. The Stundist leaders respected no geographical limits. They and their emissaries traveled into Bessarabia, the Crimea, Ekaterinoslav and Kief, and wherever they went they met with the most extraordinary success. They were received with open arms and with open hearts. Despoiled and emptied of all spiritual life by the perfunctory and often scandalous ministrations of the Orthodox clergy, and hungering after a higher and a fuller life, the simple Russian peasants felt that in the new Evangel, now for the first time heard by them, there was healing, and comfort, and repletion. The gathering communities of Stundists bubbled over with zeal and enthusiasm, and wherever a man was found among them who had any gift of speech, he was giving all his spare time to telling to others, near and at a distance, the wonderful tidings that had brought peace to his own soul.

The emancipation of the Russian serfs in 1861 gave a wonderful impetus to the movement we are considering. Prior to the proclamation of this beneficent enactment the peasants were confined to their own villages, and it was with the utmost difficulty that they could move about from place

to place. The emancipation in great measure put an end to this restriction, enabling thousands of peasants to wander forth either in search of work or to gratify the extraordinary love of change and adventure inborn in every Little Russian's heart. From Osnova, Nicolaievsk, Karlovka, Lubomir, and other villages, an extraordinary movement outwards of peasants seeking work began in 1862 and 1863. Many of these had been already inoculated with the teachings of Balaban, Ratushni, and Zimbal. Supplied with New Testaments, they moved about all over the South, sowing the seed that was afterwards to bring forth so abundantly. They stepped beyond the bounds of the province of Kherson into Kief and Podolia, cementing together the isolated groups of believers already existing there. It was at this time that the valuable services of Ivan Lisotski were enlisted in the cause. Masses of people crowded the meeting-houses; they sang, and prayed, and read the Gospels, and hundreds of families gave in their adhesion to Protestantism. The police were nonplussed; it was all so new, and they were without instructions. The priests were aghast; it was a tide the force of which they were powerless to stem, the depth of which they could not fathom. The higher officials in St. Petersburg and in the governor's chanceries hesitated, loth to begin a persecution which would only invest the Stundist leaders with the aureole of martyrs, and make them sacred in the eyes of their followers.

It is interesting to read the contemporary reports of the local clergy. One of these worthies wrote to Archbishop Dimitri, of Kherson, that certain of his flock had ceased attendance at church, murmured at paying the church dues, met together to read strange books, and were leading immoral lives. In 1865 the priest of Osnova demanded powers to deal with the growing force of the "heretics" who met in Michael Ratushni's house to read the Gospels and sing "extraordinary verses." He could do nothing with them, he reported, for

they declared that they did not believe in pastors. "The meetings still continue," he wrote later, "but I can find no fault with their treatment of the icons, as each family has its icon in the proper place, and shows the proper reverence to it." It may be gathered from this that the early Stundists did not at first altogether break with the rites of the Greek Church. Icon worship, the use of the sign of the Cross, yearly confessions, were still outwardly observed, although no one knew better than the revolted peasants that all these things were idolatrous, and that adhesion to their use was dissimulation and humiliating to themselves.

Some of the reports from the village priests, men altogether ignorant of the true inwardness of what was going on, are amusing, as well as instructive. One Orthodox divine is shocked that twice a week the schismatics drink only milk, a statement altogether devoid of foundation; another states that these Stundists call one another "brother" and "sister," even when not related by blood; a third is disgusted that every one in their meetings sings—women as well as men. Much indignation is expended on the fact that the Stundists have no respect for the one hundred and three holy days of the Church, and that, instead of enjoying themselves at the village drink shops and spending their evenings in dancing, as became Orthodox peasants, the Stundists ploughed their fields and threshed out their corn on these days, and spent their evenings reading, or teaching their children to read.

It was remarked, even as early as 1867, that as soon as a peasant became affected with the new spirit that was abroad, his first thought was to learn to read. Probably at the time of which we are speaking not five per cent. of the Russian peasants could read and write. It may be safely said, however, that even then not one Stundist in a hundred was ignorant of reading and writing. It was this desire for enlightenment that came in for so much suspicion and dislike from the

village popes. They felt that their power, already waning, would altogether vanish before the fresh, healthful spirit of enquiry, as soon as their so-long-deluded flocks began to ask themselves whether the things that are are the things that ought to be. Our chief sources of information on what happened during the sixties and seventies are derived from these reports of the clergy. Of course, we must read between the lines, making all due allowance for the bitterness and bigotry of the writers. We gather, however, the positive information that in 1867 the number of dissenters in Kherson was rapidly increasing, and that open alarm was expressed by the authorities at the power and progress of the Stundist movement. In a moment of panic the arrest of Ratushni and his brother was ordered. Their incarceration was of short duration, but it was the first of a long and increasing series of abominable acts against these harmless and inoffensive men.

And now steps on the scene one of the most remarkable figures concerned in shaping and organizing the great revolt. Karl Bonekemper was the son of the Pastor Bonekemper, about whose work in Rohrback we have already some information. He had commenced life intending to devote himself to a mercantile career in Russia, but as he grew older ambition led him to seek his fortunes in America. At Smyrna he embarked for New York. In a great storm at sea he felt his mind led toward heavenly things, and determined that on his arrival in the New World he would devote himself to the service of his Master. This he faithfully carried out. After careful training in an American theological school he entered on ministerial work in a small town in the State of Pennsylvania, and remained there some years receiving instruction and gaining experience. But hearing that his father's health was breaking, young Bonekemper altered his plans, and decided to return to Russia. His father died before he reached Rohrbach, and when he at

length arrived it was as his father's successor in the pastorate. Pastor Karl was a man of different calibre from his father. The gentleness of both men was remarkable, but the son was consumed with zeal, eager, brilliant and accomplished. He was a master of the Russian language, a skillful physician, and thoroughly understood his fellow-man. This was the man who now assumed the leadership of Stundism, the man to whom, before all others, the early strength and flow of the movement is due.

CHAPTER III.

Growth.

It was in 1867 that Karl Bonekemper arrived in Rohrbach to take up the office vacated by his father's death. We have no direct details as to his method or manner of work for the next ten years; all we know is that he was in close touch with most of the Stundist leaders in Kherson, Kief, and elsewhere. He knew them all, advised them in their difficulties, and conducted an extensive correspondence with them. Some of his letters—epistles, we ought rather to call them—had a most extensive circulation, and were universally acknowledged as authoritative deliverances. These were years of extraordinary growth, and it is interesting to take up the reports of the Russian clergy, and trace the rapid course of the movement from village to village over almost every part of the Southern and South-western provinces of the empire. Bonekemper's influence was paramount. The leaders not only applied to him for instruction as to organization, but also on points of faith and interpretation. He had one or two cardinal pieces of advice that he never wearied of inculcating: "Learn to read, both men and women of you, and teach your children to read." "God's will and revelation are found in the New Testament; therefore, obtain a New Testament at all costs, and study it day and night." "Look at your neighbors and see what a curse drink is, how it enervates a man, and destroys his best faculties; abstain, therefore, from that which works such havoc." "Be generous to your brother in darkness; be not spiritu-

ally proud; seek to enlighten him, he is your brother." This was nearly the whole of Bonekemper's teaching.

In 1867 and 1868 we see the evangelical movement streaming out into the villages of the populous district of Ananieff. A good many disturbances marked its course here. The Protestants of Ananieff were not gifted with the patience or tact of their brethren in other districts. Under their leader, Adam Voisarovski, they carried on an unrelenting campaign against relics, icon worship, and prayers to saints; and the clergy in their reports denounced them as awful blasphemers, and urged the authorities to take stern vengeance on the heretics. A number of prominent Stundists were arrested in consequence, but they only suffered imprisonment for a few weeks. Archbishop Dimitri, of Kherson, was greatly exercised as to the best course to pursue to stem the rising tide. He decided on selecting a number of priests, well acquainted with the history and doctrines of the Orthodox Church, and these he sent to the disaffected districts to entreat the peasants back to the fold. The experiment was not encouraging. The priests were everywhere vanquished in argument, and not a single Stundist could they persuade to recant his errors. The Archbishop thereupon denounced Stundism as a "dangerous" sect. "They do not believe in the efficacy of the holy sacraments," he wrote, "nor in the necessity for a clergy. They refuse to reverence the icons, or pray to the saints," and he called upon the secular power to aid him in extirpating so pestilent a swarm of mischief-makers, dangerous alike to Church and State. We can gather from this that towards 1870, when this appeal was made, the Stundists were gradually sundering themselves from all connection with the Orthodox faith, and refusing any longer to hold to the forms and ceremonies of the Church. Further arrests were made, arbitrary arrests, most of them, made at the instigation of the priests. The secretaries complained to

one of the Archbishop's "missionaries" that they were being arrested everywhere, and desired to know where it would all end. "End!" exclaimed the priest ominously, "it is only beginning."

The meetings continued to increase in numbers. Whole villages gave in their adhesion to Protestantism, and it was computed that in the province of Kherson alone about thirty thousand peasants had now joined the movement, and had severed connection with the Orthodox Church. In other provinces, notably in Bessarabia, the cause was also winning its way with wonderful strides. We are unable, unfortunately, to give any definite details of its growth in Bessarabia, but there can be little doubt that this growth was owing more to the labors of German colonists settled there than to the preaching of the Russian brethren from Kherson. The villages on the lower and middle Dnieper were now all infected with the new heresy, so were the far-lying hamlets in the Crimea, so were some of the *stanitsi* in the country of the Don Cossacks.

When the year 1870 opened, the seventy thousand peasants, who were computed at that time to have joined the Stundist movement, were spread over the ten provinces between the Austrian frontier and the Volga—Podolia, Volhynia, Bessarabia, Kief, Kherson, Poltava, Ekaterinoslav, the Taurida, Kursh, and the land of the Don Cossacks. There is reason to suppose that before this period certain villages in the provinces of Orel and Chernigov were also slightly affected. Very little information is forthcoming as to how the Gospel message found its way into these vast territories. The wind blew where it listed, and people heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it came or whither it went. The Spirit of God was in the movement, and who can record or measure the Spirit's doings?

Only in two provinces, Kherson and Kief, can we follow

with any degree of accuracy the course of this most marvelous revolt. We have already sketched its growth in Kherson; let us now turn to Kief. The first village affected seems to have been Plosskoye. This was in 1868. Here, as elsewhere, here as in Galilee, it was the homeless and landless who first attached themselves to the new Evangel. Tyshkevitch was one of the earliest pioneers of the faith in this province. An able colleague of his was Pavl Zyboulski. Tyshkevitch had lived for many years in Kherson, and had married a Protestant wife there. He had been long under the influence of Bonekemper and other pastors. Indeed, so completely had German ideas penetrated and permeated him that he is said to have worn his beard and his clothes in the German fashion. Zyboulski was undoubtedly an abler man than Tyshkevitch, a man with an extraordinary gift of lucid and persuasive speech. Abjectly poor, totally without means of support, he wandered about from village to village, and was supplied by the brethren with the bare necessities of life. He also had lived sometime in Kherson, and his native zeal had been shaped and directed by Bonekemper. The meetings at Plosskoye were at first held secretly for fear of the police and priests, but after a while, seeing that no very strong measures against them were adopted, the brethren grew bolder, and met openly day by day in Zyboulski's lodgings.

Peasants from the surrounding villages soon heard of the grand new message delivered to their fellows in Plosskoye, and streamed in to hear the preachers. When they returned to their homes they in turn began to preach, and from their villages radii of light went out in turn to villages still more remote. At last the attention of Arseni, Metropolitan of Kief, was attracted. He put the police on the track of Tyshkevitch and other leaders, numerous arrests were made, meeting-places were closed, and arbitrary fines were inflicted on a number of the most prominent Stundists

in the district of Tarastch. Both Tyshkevitch and Zyboulski were arrested and conveyed to prison in Tarastch, where they remained for over a year. In gaol they were often visited by priests sent to them by the Metropolitan, who used every effort to persuade the prisoners to return to the Church. Long disputations were held in the prison cell between these devoted men on one side and the inquisition agents on the other. They discussed the worship of the Virgin, the mediation of the Saints, the use of the sign of the Cross, and reverence to icons; but to one and all of the learned arguments of the priests the Stundist leaders made one answer: "These things are altogether absurd and unnecessary, and if they are not idolatrous, they lead to idolatry. We will have none of your theatrical accessories. We want the New Testament and that alone—nothing else."

Early in 1872 Stundism had spread over the whole of Tarastch and into the thickly-peopled Kanev and Vasilkovski districts. The history of its progress in these two districts, especially in Kanev, is full of interest, the element of adventure entering largely into it. Kanev is a small town on the middle Dneiper, and north and south of it are long stretches of reed and sedge, through which the mighty stream flows. Some of the most powerful sermons ever delivered by Stundist preachers were delivered among the rustling sedge on the banks of the river, with scouts out all around watching for the police. Night meetings were frequent. Out in hollows in the steppe, or in outlying cottages, the Kief Stundists met in small but enthusiastic bodies to worship God, unmolested by the police, and their always faithful allies, the priests.

There is a well-authenticated story of a leader who, when conducting one of these night services, was hurriedly told that the police were on his track, and would be in the room in a few minutes. He was equal to the emergency. The

police met in the doorway a woman with muffled head carrying a baby. Inside they found a few peasants drinking tea. The leader and the baby had escaped to the steppe.

CHAPTER IV.

Closing up the Ranks.

From 1873 to 1880 the onward progress of the movement we have called Stundism was extraordinary; but it was confined within certain well-defined geographical limits. As soon as it reached the farthest bounds of the provinces inhabited by the Little Russians and touched the territory of the Great Russians it received a check. The stolid, phlegmatic, and somewhat stupid Great Russian evinced little or no sympathy with the Protestant tenets, and held stubbornly to his orthodoxy, while hundreds of thousands of the imaginative and sympathetic peasants of the Ukraine and the Southern steppes were in a ferment of religious enthusiasm. A curious contrast might be drawn between this state of affairs in Russia and the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Then it was the imaginative and æsthetic nations of Europe,—Italians, Spaniards and South Germans, who offered a stubborn resistance to the doctrines of Luther and Calvin. It was the heavy, slow-thinking nations of the North,—Germans and Scandinavians, who were the strength of the Protestant movement of three hundred years ago.

It will be useful, therefore, if we endeavor to mark out with greater precision the limits which Stundism reached in 1875, limits beyond which it did not appreciably advance during the next eighteen years, or until the present time. Beginning in the West in central Poland about the fifty-third

parallel of latitude, and following a straight line eastward, we pass through Chernigov, the capital of the province of the same name. Thence in a north-easterly direction we pass through the important town of Orel. From Orel, a line drawn south-east will pass through Voronej to Tsaritsyn and Astrakhan on the lower Volga. South of this boundary line live the Stundists; those north of the line being only isolated individuals. Stundism, therefore, is strictly a South Russian movement, confined in great measure to the Little Russians.

We have seen that in 1870 the adherents of Stundism were numbered at seventy thousand. The Russian press now began to occupy itself a good deal with the wonderful progress of the Stundists in Kief, Poltava and Kherson during the next five years. One writer went so far as to put their number in 1877 at 300,000. We think, however, that a juster estimate would be two hundred thousand. If we allow, on one hand, for a slower rate of growth since 1877, and on the other for defection, and the results of persecution, we think we are well within the truth when we place the number of Stundists at the present time at two hundred and fifty thousand. It is a difficult matter to state with any degree of exactness the number living in each province, but for the purposes of this short sketch we have had special inquiries made, and the following table sets forth the result of these investigations, and may be accepted as fairly accurate:

Province.	No. of Stundists.
Astrakhan	2,000
Bessarabia	20,000
Caucasia (Trans and Cis)	9,000
Chernigov	2,000
Don Cossack Country	10,000
Ekaterinoslav	15,000
Kharkov	8,000
Kherson	50,000
Kief	80,000

Province.	No. of Stundists.
Kursk	5,000
Orel	2,000
Podolia	8,000
Poland (Russian)	4,000
Poltava	10,000
Taurida and Crimea	15,000
Volga Valley	7,000
Volhynia	5,000

It was in the beginning of the seventies, when their number was about one hundred thousand, that the Stundist leaders, and notably Balaban, Ratushni, and Ryaboshapka of Kherson, and Lisotski, Zyboulski, and Kapustinski of Kief, endeavored to give some sort of shape, some sort of elementary organization, to the great movement of opinion now so rapidly increasing around them. Pastor Bonekemper's level sense was here of inestimable advantage to them. He recommended the division of the field into presbyteries, over each of which the brethren were to elect, or otherwise appoint, their own presbyter. If the presbytery were large, the presbyter was to be assisted by a deacon or deacons. He further advised the periodical assembling of the presbyters and deacons in council or synod; the systematic visitation of remote villages where the cause was weak; the establishment of a common fund for the relief of sick and aged brethren; and the partial support of presbyters who should incur loss by traveling about on mission work during seed-time or harvest. It was also suggested that lists should be made, and regularly revised, of the church members. These were the principal recommendations made by Bonekemper and the Stundist leaders to their people. It was unanimously felt that some such steps were absolutely necessary if the movement was to be kept in hand, and prevented from drifting into chaos. But the difficulties to be encountered were enormous, and it was not until after superhuman efforts had been made, chiefly by Ryaboshapka, Ratushni,

and Strigoun, that their attempt at organization took shape, and some rough system was infused into the movement.

Dangers now began to thicken around the leaders. Their footsteps were dogged from place to place; scores of times they were in gaol for longer or shorter periods; as soon as their object was known to priests and police, steps were at once taken to counteract their action. Newly appointed presbyters and deacons would be moved about from place to place by "administrative" order of the local authorities, not permitted to settle for any time in any one district. The lists containing the names of the brethren were frequently seized by the police, and with these in their possession the authorities at any moment could put their hands on any one they suspected, and accuse him or her of defection from the Orthodox Church. Scores of Stundists were put in gaol for no other reason save that their names were on these lists. But notwithstanding every effort made to repress Stundism, notwithstanding the continuous thwarting of the plans of its leaders, the wonderful peasant revolt grew and strengthened all through the years before 1880; and from the confusion and disorder into which they were plunged, both by their own ignorance and by the hostility of the government, there slowly emerged a fairly organized and cohesive Church, its parts well in touch one with another, all of them acting together in tolerable unison. We hear of no rivalries among the leaders. Although, as was to be expected, shades and divergencies of views crept in, although the brethren in Bessarabia, for instance, could not see eye to eye with those in Kief and Kherson, they never dreamed of withholding their sympathies from one another, or of rejecting the ministrations of those who, differing from them in non-essentials, yet held the grand cardinal doctrines of their common Protestant faith.

Perhaps a more serious division in the ranks of the Protestants was made by the appearance of Baptist preachers

among them. Stundism as we know it now is composed of two great divisions, one adhering to infant, the other to adult baptism. By far the greater number, probably more than two-thirds, are adherents of the doctrine of infant baptism. We first hear of Russian Baptists in connection with this movement as early as 1865. They were the spiritual children of the German Baptists Pritzkau, Wieler, and others. These first converts were insignificant men, who played no part of any prominence in the future history of the movement; but it was not long before others of greater importance joined the Baptists, attracted, doubtless, by their greater strictness of rule, and their more hostile and militant attitude towards the Orthodox Church. Foremost among these were Balaban of Kherson, and Kapustinski of Kief. Others who joined and greatly influenced them were Zimbal of Karlovka, and Trophim Khlistoun— men of saintly lives, who prayed in quiet, and whose lives were sermons not made with words. Khlistoun was, however, not always quiet. When he chose he was a most powerful speaker, and between 1870 and 1875 did some useful evangelistic work all over the South of Russia. Those who have heard him preach speak of his great oratorical powers, of how he swayed his hearers to passion or to prayer, to thanksgiving or to revolt, to the loftiest heights of spiritual ecstasy or to lowest depths of humiliation.[1]

There can be little doubt that the Baptist movement was a distinct advantage to Stundism. It did much to make the ordinary Russian Protestant more vertebrate. Until the Baptist set his face sternly against the Orthodox Church, and all its corruptions and defilements, the Stundist was satisfied to steer diplomatically between his new and his old faith.

[1] A few months ago, Khlistoun was banished to a remote and inhospitable part of the Caucasus, where he has suffered great hardships and poverty. Kapustinski was banished nearly five years ago, and is now only a wreck of the man he was when he roused the peasants of Kief to their revolt against the formalism and slavery of the Russian Church.

Afraid of giving offense and of consequent trouble, he adopted a line of action and a mental attitude—outward conformity to Orthodoxy and inward contempt for it—which was suicidal, destructive of all true spiritual progress. The Baptists rebelled, and it is to their rectitude on this point that the present lofty position of Stundism is due. To German Baptists like Wieler, Pritzkau, Bekker, and Onken, of Hamburg, the Stundists are deeply indebted, for, in addition to purifying them from the taint of dissimulation, they were instrumental in no small degree in putting the stronger and sterner elements of the movement into a thoroughly orderly position. The Baptist wing of the Stundists is undoubtedly the best organized and equipped. But if the German Baptists were at first so friendly and sympathetic, it is a matter of deep regret that latterly, when the storm and stress of persecution has beaten alike upon both sections of the Russian brethren, the Germans have held themselves studiously aloof. Secure in their own rights to worship God in their own way, they have proved themselves lacking in sympathy for their Russian co-religionists. We trust that they will no longer incur this reproach, and that they will now exert themselves to obtain for their Russian brethren what they enjoy for themselves. They are a powerful body, and their apparent callousness during the recent persecutions is hardly to their credit.

CHAPTER V.

Persecution.

In the chapters preceding this we have alluded more than once to the extreme hostility of Church and State to the Stundists. Hostility to anything and anybody that is enlightened and loves freedom is a settled policy in Russia, and has characterized the government of that country for more than three hundred years. Let a movement raise its head, having for its object either the spiritual enlightenment or the temporal benefit of the people, and it is ruthlessly crushed. The fabric of Russian power is an autocracy based on ignorance and superstition; and, therefore, it is the interest of self-preservation that has always prompted the Czar's government to crush anything that would bring enlightenment in its train. Since Peter the Great's days, when the Old Believers were so ruthlessly scourged, burnt, and banished, until the present time, a steady policy of repression has been maintained against dissent from the Orthodox Church. Thousands of the Old Believers were then banished, imprisoned, flogged, tortured; and to-day, after the lapse of nearly two hundred and fifty years, thousands of Stundists and Baptists, of Molokans and Dukhobortsi, are banished to the remotest corners of the vast empire, and imprisoned and tortured in a variety of ways, only a degree less inhuman than the scourgings and rackings of the Middle Ages. The nations of the West do not seem to be alive to this. They do not seem to realize that they have at their gates a Power more intolerant of religious liberty than was Spain in her

worst days, and persecutors as unscrupulous and narrow-minded as Alva and Torquemada. How can they know it? Russia works in secret; her methods are underground, and her victims are voiceless.

There is no press in Russia worthy the name to report and denounce each case of persecution as it occurs. The trials of heretics are conducted with closed doors, the public being carefully excluded. Russians themselves do not know a tenth of what is being done. We say that the victims are voiceless. From time to time Russia has tried her hand at persecuting peoples who are not her own—the Lutherans of the Baltic provinces, and the Jews of the south and west; but Germany has jealously watched the progress of events in the former case, hampering, and finally staying the arm of the persecutor; and a powerful European press, and the great financial influence of European Jews have been effectual in checking a vulgar persecution which threatened, at one time, to assume such gigantic proportions. But when Russia turns to her own people she persecutes humble peasants who are friendless, poverty-stricken, ignorant, who in fear and trembling suffer in silence and with dog-like resignation.

It was not until 1877 or 1878 that the Stundists began to feel the weight of persecution. Before that date there had been, of course, numerous instances where preachers had been hauled off to prison on the charge of perverting the Orthodox, and a beginning had been made of those little settlements of banished Protestants which were afterwards to assume such importance; but up till this period no steady and systematic effort had been made to extirpate the heretics, or to make them feel that as a body their disloyalty to the Orthodox Church meant outlawry and ruin, and the loss of every personal right and privilege. The clergy were the instigators of this abominable persecution. From first to last they had never faltered in their ruthless determination

to break the power of men who set at naught their authority, and valued at their true estimation the pretensions which made these ignorant and coarse-living men the sole representatives of true religion in their land. Unaided, the clergy soon discovered that they were powerless against the growing strength of the Stundists. They saw that village after village became infected by heresy, and that their flocks, hitherto so amenable to their guidance, or so callous, were no longer either docile or indifferent. It could not be tolerated longer. Violent reports of Stundist immorality and blasphemy came pouring in to the bishops and archbishops, and at a conference held in Kief under the presidency of the Metropolitan Platon, and at which the representatives of nine dioceses were present, it was resolved to petition the secular powers to lend their aid in suppressing a movement dangerous alike to Church and to State.

In justice to the secular powers, it should be stated that their aid was not willingly given at first. Probably they had not fully gauged the strength of the Protestant movement; more probably they were loth to begin a course of action the end of which could not be foreseen, and which would inevitably give strength to the Protestants, and bestow on all who suffered the enviable reputation and authority of martyrs. In 1878, however, the worldly and the spiritual powers combined their forces, and the persecution began. It began by police raids on certain villages in Kherson and Kief. New Testaments and manuscript hymn-books were confiscated by the hundred, and a large number of meeting-houses were ordered to be closed. The principal leaders were placed under police *surveillance*, their passports were taken from them, and they were forbidden to leave their own villages. It is impossible in the space at our disposal to enter into the details of this persecution in every one of the thirteen provinces over which the Stundists were distributed; all we can do in this and the following chapter is to notice certain

phases of this nineteenth century Inquisition, and to present our readers with a rough outline of the loving methods taken by "Holy" Russia to win back to the fold the sheep who had strayed from the fat pastures of Orthodoxy into the stony and famished byways of Dissent.

From 1878 to 1882 the police raiding continued, but it had no effect in the desired direction. Deprived of their New Testaments and hymn-books, the Stundists quietly procured others; prevented from meeting for worship in their cottages they went out to the open steppe. If the old presbyters and deacons could not leave their localities for the purpose of confirming the more remote and weaker churches, other presbyters were ordained who could. There was no dismay, no faltering. And the authorities soon recognized this. A *blagotchin*, or rural dean, writing in 1881, said: "We must sorrowfully confess that, notwithstanding the earnest attempts made by the Church to wean these schismatics from their errors, notwithstanding admonition and prayerful entreaty, *notwithstanding the gentle and paternal pressure of the worldly powers*, they continue in their stiff-necked course, and evince no desire to be reconciled to us." The "gentle and paternal pressure" is delicious.

After 1882 stronger measures were adopted. The *ispravniki*, or local commissaries of police—men generally of a common and rough type, whose tyrannical methods are proverbial—were empowered to levy arbitrary fines on peasants who continued to attend Stundist meetings after a warning to absent themselves. The fines were not to exceed twenty roubles, but twenty roubles is as much to an impoverished Russian peasant as twenty pounds sterling would be to an English agricultural laborer. The *ispravniki* were further empowered to distrain should the fine not be paid. Thereupon began a most iniquitous series of proceedings. Dressed in their little brief authority, these tyrants played

such fantastic tricks that misery and ruin were brought to hundreds of happy homes. All through the winters of 1882 and 1883 it was quite a common thing to see in the villages auctions of the effects of Stundists—their bedding, clothes, and sticks of furniture being sold to liquidate these scandalous fines. We have before us a list of the Stundists fined and imprisoned in the one village of Nerubalsk. During the space of eighteen months, twelve families here were fined the incredible sum of two thousand six hundred roubles, equivalent in our currency to thirteen hundred dollars. One man, more than usually obstinate in his views, was fined altogether over seven hundred roubles. His name is *Khariton Konotop*, and he and all his brethren, rather than pay these iniquitous fines, went to prison, and had their effects sold by the police.

The deeds done in Nerubalsk were only a sample of the proceedings in scores of other villages where Stundists lived. But the clergy were not yet satisfied. Another highly-placed minister of religion, writing to the Kief Ecclesiastical Consistory in 1883, states that these acts of the local authority cannot cope with the evil, and that until the "great powers" (meaning the Holy Synod and the provincial governors) take decisive action, there can be no hope for any mitigation of the evils of Stundism. "It is a national evil, this Stundism," he writes; "it is destructive of our best and holiest institutions; it aims its shafts at the State as well as at the Church; it seeks to bring about anarchy and Nihilism, and it is therefore the paramount duty of provincial governors to leave no stone unturned in their efforts to purify our beloved fatherland from the stain of these dangerous disturbers of society." The bishops took precisely this view, and either in 1883 or 1884 they petitioned the Holy Synod to move provincial governors to more drastic measures, and especially to use for this purpose the power vested in them of "administrative process."

Every governor of a province in Russia has the power to get rid of persons living within his jurisdiction, who in his sole opinion are suspected of designs against the peace of the province. No trial at law is necessary. The governor can transport either to Siberia or the Caucasus any persons who are considered troublesome, but against whom the evidence is not sufficiently strong to allow of a trial by jury. This is the dread administrative process. Some of the governors, to their credit it must be said, were not at all eager to exercise this despotic power; others, notably the governor of Kief, made themselves conspicuous by their arbitrary use, or rather abuse, of it.

We now enter on the period of systematic effort to get rid of the Stundist leaders. In the following chapter we hope to give some examples of what has been done in different parts of the country by these Inquisitors of the nineteenth century. We shall have some strange tales to tell.

CHAPTER VI.

Persecution of the Leaders.

When the government decided to strike at Stundism through its leaders it took a step which, from its own point of view, was most effective. To continue fining and imprisoning the insignificant Stundists in the villages—men whose work in no way affected the general movement, and allow the organizers and preachers to go scot-free, was not a wise system of persecution. The police soon discovered this, and at once steps were taken to obtain a list of those who were most prominent in their advocacy of the Protestant cause. These lists were forwarded to the provincial governors, and immediately afterwards blow upon blow began to fall on the Apostles of Stundism. One of the first who suffered was Titchenko, a peasant of the province of Kief. He was charged with the crime of endeavoring to wean his fellow villagers from the Orthodox Church, and, further, with blasphemous utterances against the sanctity of the icons. He is even alleged to have compared icons to idols. The court found him guilty, and he was sentenced to be fined, and to imprisonment for six weeks. But the priest who was his accuser, dissatisfied with the comparative clemency of the court, made a bitter complaint to the Archbishop of Kief, and the provincial governor was asked to supersede the decision of the court. So the unfortunate Titchenko, as soon as his six weeks in gaol were over, was "administrated," and, with his family, obliged to settle in one of the distant provinces of the empire. All his little belongings

he had to get rid of at a great sacrifice, and when he at last arrived at his destination he was a ruined man.

Hard upon Titchenko's case followed that of Trofim Babienko. Babienko was not a very wise man; he was more zealous than discreet. His neighbors highly resented his references to their "idolatry" and "stupidity," and, taking the law into their own hands, they beat him severely. To complain of their treatment, he arrived before the governor of Kief. This potentate, without troubling himself to inquire into the merits of the case, ordered Babienko's immediate arrest and transportation to Ciscaucasia. His wife and family were not permitted to see him before his departure, and, deprived suddenly of their bread-winner, they were ruined.

Ivan Solovev's case is interesting, as it displays another method of breaking a man's heart and ruining his worldly prospects. He also was one of the Kief leaders, a young man of bright intelligence and ardent temperament. Accused before the governor of spreading heretical tenets, he received notice that within fourteen days he was to clear out of the bounds of the province of Kief. He had five children and a wife, and worked a flourishing little farm. Everything had to be sold at a ruinous loss. But in good heart he left all, and settled in the province of Kherson, where he resolutely began to repair his broken fortunes. His seed was hardly in the ground when he was informed by the local authority that the governor had ordered him to "move on." He was in debt for his seed and his cattle, so the Jews came in, seized everything, and one morning he and his family began a long tramp of one hundred and fifty miles to Bessarabia. One old horse that they were able to save helped to relieve them on their march, for they all took turns at riding. They arrived, after a month's march, in Bessarabia, but two of the children had died on the road. He had hardly settled down in a little village near Kishenev,

when again that dread order to "move on" was received, and again the weary Solovev began his wanderings. Another child had died in Bessarabia, and the reduced family now made their way to the Taurida, where he hoped that the brethren would succor him in his necessity. About halfway on his journey, as he was passing through a small town, he was informed by the police that he was not to continue his present route, but to proceed to Ciscaucasia, where orders had been already sent to prepare the authorities for his arrival. The wretched, harassed man, with his sick wife and two remaining children, arrived at last in Stavropol, famished and emaciated, with his hope and his passion of spirit gone forever.

Solovev's case is a type of numerous others. One of the noblest of the Kief preachers, Ivan Lisotski, was treated in the same way. Two of his children also succumbed to the hardships of travel, his means of livelihood were also taken from him, and for over ten years he was harried about from province to province, but, unlike Solovev, he never lost hope, he always remained sanguine and buoyant, and now from his place of exile in distant Transcaucasia he maintains a correspondence with his friends in Russia which heartens them in their troubles, and does much to bind together in bonds of brotherly sympathy the sorrowing villagers whose lot is becoming so terrible with those who have gone from them into banishment and exile.

All through the five years between 1882 and 1887 the police were active in the service of the Inquisition. The local prisons in the provinces of Kief, Kharkov, Bessarabia, and Kherson always contained numbers of Stundists, men and women who had either been tried and found guilty of tampering with the Orthodox, or else were there on suspicion of having done so. Every gang of criminals which left the central gaols in these provinces counted among its numbers some who were noble servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, who

walked in chains with heads shaven, and clad in the ignominious prison garb, for no other offense than that they sought to worship God in accordance with the dictates of their consciences. There was no distinction drawn between such "criminals" and the worst desperadoes of the country. They walked in the same *étape*, they herded in the same vile dens at night, they were obliged to listen to the filthy conversation of their companions, they were treated with the same contumely by their soldier guards. Of course many a Stundist rejoiced in the opportunities thus afforded him of doing noble evangelistic work.

One man, a noble character, cast into the gaol at Tiflis amongst a crew of vile scoundrels, has recorded his joy at having such an opportunity of preaching the Gospel.[1] He describes how he was obliged to put on a filthy prison costume, swarming with vermin, and stained with every abomination. He describes the fetid atmosphere of the den in which he and twenty others passed the hours of the tropical nights. But the other prisoners grew to respect his gentle character; and he relates how some of them, unable otherwise to show him kindness, rolled up their prison shoes in a bag, and put this bundle under his head at night to serve him as a pillow. This man's sole offense was alleged disrespectful words against the Orthodox Church. He was not tried, there was no evidence against him save the suspicion of a priest, but his punishment was four years' banishment to a remote province of the empire, and the loss of most of his personal rights and privileges.

It is impossible in a sketch like this to give a hundredth part of the cases of atrocious persecution which have been brought to our knowledge during the past ten years. We can only pick out examples here and there from all parts of

[1] We dare not give the name of this man. His term of imprisonment has expired, and he is again at liberty; but should public mention be made of him and of his work, it would do much to reawaken the suspicion of the Russian authorities.

the South of Russia, and present these to our readers as cases representing hundred of others. Yegor Ivanov was a sergeant in the army reserve, who, when serving as a soldier, had been converted to Protestantism. He had been promoted to the *gendarmerie*, and had been indiscreet enough to be present once at a gathering of Stundists, where an icon was smashed with a hatchet. He himself had taken no part in the iconoclasm; but he was a sympathizer. A jury found him guilty of being accessory to the act, and he was banished for life, with the forfeiture of all personal rights and privileges. His journey to the remote part of Transcaucasia, appointed as his abode, was a terrible one. In chains he tramped across the snows of the Caucasian passes, and the scenes at night in the ill-ventilated *étape* houses were awful. The stifling atmosphere, the indecency, the loathsome vermin, the brutality of the guard, he will never forget. He wonders that he did not become insane.

Let us next take the case of Ivan Golovtchenko, a Stundist preacher in the province of Ekaterinoslav. He was taken before the Court on a charge of propagating Stundist doctrines. The evidence against him was of the flimsiest character, but it was sufficient, nevertheless, to convince an Orthodox jury of peasants of his guilt. He was sentenced to three years in gaol. As soon as his term of imprisonment had expired, the authorities made inquiry in his native village if he was a safe person to permit to return to his home. The priest to whom this inquiry was addressed held up his hands in holy horror at the idea. "Certainly not," he replied, "he is an arch heretic, and would only lead my flock astray." So an administrative order was made out, banishing poor Golovtchenko to Siberia for life. During his term in prison his wretched family were literally starving, and their experiences on the long and desolate road to Siberia were terrible.

CHAPTER VII.

Some of the Martyrs.

No measure of persecution is apparently too mean to be put in force against the Stundists. Petty espionage by miserable policemen in the villages; inquisitorial questionings by the priests; deeds of inconceivable vileness by the village authorities—those are the tactics pursued by the mighty Russian government against a harmless handful of their subjects, whose only request is to worship God in peace and truth. Religious intolerance is just as rampant in Russia to-day as it was in England during the reigns of the Tudors, and it is only prevented from going to the extremes of personal torture and the public stake by the dread of Western opinion. In the last two chapters on this subject we have endeavored to place before our readers a few of the more notable cases of persecution which disgraced the years previous to 1888; space does not allow us to describe a tenth of them. From 1888 onward the policy of extermination seems to have taken the place of simple repression, and wholesale banishment and imprisonment, not only of the leaders but of ordinary members of the Stundist community, was of constant occurrence. There was hardly a provincial gaol all over the South of Russia that did not contain representatives of Russian Protestantism; there was seldom a miserable gang of prisoners making its way to Siberia or Transcaucasia that lacked a Stundist preacher. So great were the numbers sent across the Caucasus to the province of Elizabethpol that the authorities determined to settle them

in little colonies in the remoter parts of the province, lest that by uniting their strength they should be confirmed in their heterodoxy and exert a pernicious influence on Orthodox Christians in their neighborhood. So the governor of the province—his name should be mentioned, Prince Nakashidze—determined to bring division and weakness among the banished brethren. He discovered that the Stundists were not all of one mind on questions of theology; so ingeniously selecting representatives of opposing views, he arranged that they should live together and "fight it out."

Perhaps a still more cruel arrangement was the selection of awful deserts like Gerusi, Terter, Yevlach, and other places, as the domicile of the Stundist leaders. Gerusi, a wretched Tartar village near the Persian frontier, a hot hollow in summer, surrounded by stony and parched hills, the sun beating down with unpitying intensity, was the place to which most of the preachers were now banished. From Kief and Kherson, from Bessarabia and the Crimea, from Kharkov and the Don Cossack country, came the wretched preachers of the Gospel, torn from their families, deprived of their livelihood, sick and hopeless from sufferings on their journey. Ivan Lisotski, of whom we have already heard, is here. There is no space for the names even of the chief of those who are now wearing and fretting their lives out among the parched rocks of Terter and Gerusi; but a place must be found for the names of some of Lisotski's companions, men who have done yoeman's service in the cause, and who are now patiently and prayerfully awaiting the fruits of their work. There are the Cossack preachers Fedot Kostromin, Piotr Rastchev, Procori Kundriukov, and Sergei Markov; there are the Little Russians Procop Apantchuk, Grigori Supruk, Lazar Bieletski, Sozont Kapustinski, and Ivan Kulmenko; there are the Great Russians Grigori Morozov, Pavl Adnolka, and Ivan Dovgan—these and hundreds of others. Most of these people have been sent to the Caucasus

for a period of six years. Previous to their departure from Russia they have already spent from eight to eighteen months in gaol. They are all sent *per étape* to their destination. They walk with ordinary criminals, in chains, with shaven heads, and clad in the ordinary prison costume.

Preacher Kapustinski, a most truthful and absolutely reliable man, wrote to a friend of ours describing his journey from the western province of Kief, where he had been arrested, to this remote Caucasian place of exile. There was little to note until he reached Vladikavkaz, a little town lying north of the Caucasus. Here the prisoners left the train to tramp across the mountains, one hundred and forty miles to Tiflis. The brutality, exactions and filthy language of their military guards were abominable. Arriving once at a station among the mountains, the prisoners entreated the soldiers to buy some necessary articles for them. The money was taken, but no return was made for it; and one of the prisoners who was foolish enough to display a three-rouble note was so beaten and ill-treated that his life was a burden to him until he had parted with nearly all his money in bribes. Kapustinski's gang was pushed and hustled, made to carry the soldiers' baggage, thrust at with bayonets if they resisted or remonstrated, and one unfortunate wretch had his head broken. At night the horrors were still more disgraceful, for the wives were separated from their husbands and subjected to the brutal attentions of the soldiers. In addition to the one hundred and forty miles between Vladikavkaz and Tiflis, this gang walked eighty miles from Yevlach and Shusha, and sixty miles from Shusha and Gerusi. Arrived at their destination their case was most pitiable. No provision had been made for them—no houses, or even tents. They camped out in the open until the Tartars took pity on them and gave them work. They were so poverty-stricken that twenty men have worked for a whole day gathering heavy stones from the mountains for a miser-

able pittance of twopence per day. The chief of the district, until quite recently, was a Mohammedan, and the exiles were entirely at his mercy. The Baptist preacher Pavlov, of Tiflis, asserts that the authorities in the province of Elisabethpol have placed every obstacle in the way of the Stundists obtaining work or purchasing land.

We have mentioned the names of some of the preachers from the country of the Don Cossacks banished to this inhospitable spot. Before they left Russia they were for several months in gaol. Their wives, wishing to follow them into exile, sold all their property and were ready to depart when the *Ataman* informed them that if they left for the Caucasus they must leave their children behind them—that they must choose between their husbands and their children. The distracted women remaining undecided, the police stepped in, took the children from their mothers, and, after having them baptized into the Orthodox Church, placed them under the guardianship of Orthodox relatives. Kundriukov had four children thus kidnapped, Kostromin seven, Markov three little girls without a mother. Thus we have homes broken up, and a system of ingenious torture of innocent women and children, for a parallel to which we must seek among the annals of the Middle Ages.[1]

A little over a year ago, in the columns of *The Christian World* we mentioned the case of a Baptist preacher from the town of Gorokhi, in the province of Kief. We dare not give his name, as latterly some alleviation of his position has been granted, and any public mention of his name would only bring on him and his fresh trouble. When he lived in Gorokhi, the Orthodox Russians used to visit him in crowds, and some of them sought baptism at his hands. The village priest vowed vengeance on him, took

[1] In another chapter we shall have more to say about the removing of the children from the care of Stundist parents. Within the last year or so it has become quite a common occurrence. The cases mentioned above were among the first.

him before a court of justice, and accused him of perverting certain members of his flock. The case was heard with closed doors, the public being excluded. Of course the prisoner was found guilty. "You have no right to pervert the Orthodox," said the judge, in passing sentence. "Our Emperor will not tolerate this. You will be banished to the Caucasus, and will forfeit all your rights and privileges."

The miserable man was hauled off to gaol, and remained there in misery and idleness for nearly four months. When an *étape* for the Caucasus was ready he joined it, and tramped fifty miles, laden with chains, and with shaven head, to the nearest railway station. His gang was driven unmercifully, as the drivers were afraid of losing the train. His feet became swollen and broke out into sores. When he arrived at a place called Balta facilities were given him for binding up his sores, but they broke out again when he resumed his march. After three weeks he reached Rostov on the Don. The prison here is a disgraceful one, and in a few days he was covered with lice and with sores, contracted by contact with several prisoners suffering from a loathsome skin disease. Sick and in great pain, he was ordered on to the town of Elisabethpol, in Transcaucasia. During the long interval that had elapsed since leaving his home the preacher had heard nothing of his friends, but in Elisabethpol he had a letter, stating that his wife and children were daily subjected to the threats of the villagers, and that efforts were being made to deprive them of their farm. The preacher himself was sent on to the Persian frontier, ruined and hopeless.

Or, take the case of Felix Pavilkovski, once a preacher in the province of Kherson. The priest of his village enticed him into a theological discussion. This was towards the end of 1891. Pavilkovski was indiscreet enough to let fall some expressions hostile to the Church. He was arrested at the priest's request, and sent to gaol. Disgusting work was

here thrust upon him, and petty larcenies committed on his food. The warders demanded money, and when he could not gratify them, they prepared a cage-like structure, in which a man could stand upright, and could neither sit nor lie down. Fastened into the cage, Pavilkovski was carried off to the prison privy, and remained in this fetid and horrible place for three days and three nights, the butt and laughing-stock of the gaol-birds around him. When at last he was taken out he was a huddled-up, lifeless heap. His joints had lost their use. Each day his gaolers brought him seven ounces of black bread and a mug of bad water. It will be noticed that they did not starve him.

At last the authorities decided to try Pavilkovski. Some witnesses had been discovered who would swear anything that the priest suggested. It was on their evidence that Pavilkovski and six others were sentenced to be banished for life to Eastern Siberia. After four months more in gaol the seven Stundists began their awful journey. Their wives and children were allowed to accompany them. The Stundists had their heads shaved and iron anklets riveted on. Each Protestant was chained to a convict bound for the mines. It would take up too much space if we narrated in any detail the sufferings of these seven families, but it is worth mentioning that before their long journey had drawn to a close Pavilkovski's wife and two of the other women had died from fatigue and exposure, and that of the thirteen children who left their homes in Russia only five remained alive. We have heard from these martyrs since their arrival in Siberia, and they are full of a magnificent hope that even in their distant homes they will be shown a way to spread the light of the coming Kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII.

Persecution up to Date.

In this chapter we will conclude our record of the persecutions borne by the harmless Protestants of the Southern steppes of Russia, and then pass on to consider, first, the internal organization of their Church; secondly, their religious and social ideas; and, lastly, their present position and probable future.

It has not been possible, in the necessarily limited nature of these sketches, to give any complete view of the intolerable injuries inflicted on the Stundists. Our object has rather been to select representative cases of persecution, in order that we may present in the simplest form to our readers what has actually occurred. We have taken care that these examples represent large classes of similar cases which have been occurring in all parts of the South of Russia. A few of the most recent examples of the work of the Russian St. Dominics of the nineteenth century will form the subject of this chapter.

The first case I will cite is that of three peasants from the village of Turbovka, in the province of Kief. The mother of one of these men had died, and the priest of their village was determined that she should not be buried by her own community. Somehow, in the absence of the dead woman's son, the priest managed to obtain possession of the body and have it conveyed to the church. As prayers were being said for the repose of the soul, the three peasants entered the church, and in their excitement and anger they let fall some

words which brought on a *fracas* in which the priest received a blow. We are not too much inclined to extenuate the conduct of the man who struck the blow. It was an imprudent, and, considering the circumstances, a mad act; but the punishment was frightful. Five Stundists were arrested on the charge of sacrilege; two of these abjured Stundism, and had nominal sentences of imprisonment passed on them; but the three others were sentenced to twelve, thirteen and fifteen years' hard labor in Siberia.

Piotr Boitchenko, a most noble character, one of the main props of Stundism in the province of Kursk, was charged before a court of justice with disseminating Evangelical views. There was no disputing the evidence; he had indeed been the means of bringing many from darkness into light, and he gloried in it. Found "guilty," he was exiled to the Caucasus with the forfeiture of all civil rights and privileges. For over five months he lay in gaol, treated in all respects as a common felon, and then, dressed in the ignominious prison costume, and bearing on wrists and ankles those clanking irons, which, heard in Russia, make one shudder, he was forwarded with all the usual accompaniments of cruelty to his distant place of exile. As another writer on this very case of Boitchenko's has indignantly exclaimed, "What had Boitchenko done to deserve all this ignominy and shame? Was he a polished swindler who had deluded and ruined multitudes who trusted him? or a cardsharper? or a receiver of bribes? No, no; these sit in high places, and administer the law, and lead the armies, and rule the Bourse. Boitchenko only read the New Testament to his neighbors, and explained why no man should prostrate himself before an icon. For this he tramped across the Caucasian snows, an exile in chains."

It sometimes happens that a clean sweep is made of the Stundists in a particular village. This was the case at Glukhi, in the province of Mohilev. There were nine

Stundists here, and they were all hauled off to gaol at once. The time for their trial came round, and all of them were banished to the Caucasus. In chains, and with all the other marks of ignominy, they were forwarded to their destination, suffering intolerable hardships on the way. From the same neighborhood, and about the same time, Leon Promatchenko was also exiled to the Caucasus, but by administrative process, as the evidence against him was exceptionally weak. Before he left home the miserable man was half murdered by his neighbors in an outbreak of fanatical zeal. From Balta twelve families of Stundists were removed to the Caucasus by administrative order; from Boguslovie four were sent; from Stanislavtchik, ten. Hundreds of other families dreading transportation, which means absolute impoverishment, sold their belongings, and went to Roumania, or to the provinces contiguous to Siberia. To the province of Orenburg alone it is computed that nearly one thousand have emigrated.

The Stundist villages are now terror-stricken, men, women and children in constant dread of the police, and their always faithful allies the priests. Wherever the arm of the law is thought to be slackened, or the measures taken by the government deemed not drastic enough, these faithful friends are always ready to stir up the fanaticism of the Orthodox villagers against their Stundist neighbors, and some of the most barbarous acts which could possibly stain a religious persecution have been the inevitable result. In several villages of the province of Kherson, the Orthodox peasants, instigated chiefly by the priests, have risen against the Stundists and maltreated them in the most cruel way. They have been flogged, beaten, imprisoned. One poor wretch had his arms tied and twisted until the blood spurted out; another had nails driven into his feet; a number of Baptists had water poured on them for over an hour on January 6 last, when the thermometer registered forty degrees of frost.

But probably the most horrible case of all was that which happened last autumn in the province of Kief. Were it not authenticated in every detail it would seem incredible. We have letters from the sufferers before us, and although these letters have already appeared *in extenso* in *The Christian World*, we think it our duty to refer to them again.

"All day long," one of the Stundists of Kapustinets writes, "we were kept at enforced communal duty, not allowed to return to our houses. At night, should we return, we are driven off again. Only the women and children are left at home. The chief elder of the district and the local commissary of local police gather together a number of drunken peasants and go to our cottages, where they dishonor our women. They have broken all the windows of our houses. They gathered together a quantity of evil-smelling weeds, and set fire to them in the rooms, carefully closing the windows and doors, so that our unfortunate wives and children were nearly suffocated by the smoke. All night long they were kept in this atmosphere. All our books have been taken from us by the police."

Another letter from the same district says: "Late at night, when everybody is asleep, a crowd of the villagers, led by the police, enter our houses, frightening the children, and so abusing our women that they hardly remain alive. Others will come and torture us by twisting our ears. Late at night on September 30, some of them came to my wife in my absence and tortured her, just as we read in the Bible of Susannah, only worse. They took the clothes off her, and threw her down, and with force dishonored her. The elder also dishonored her. Then they asked her to cross herself, and when she refused they forced her to do so. And remember, she was pregnant at the time. They twisted her arms, giving her horrible pain, they tore her flesh, and as I write, she is almost at death's door. All our

windows and crockery were smashed. We ask you, with tears, if you cannot help us in some way."

But have these people no redress? Well, as a matter of fact, we know that the authorities, including the governor of Kief, have known of these atrocities since last October, and that until the present time not a single attempt has been made to bring the perpetrators of them to justice!

One of the most sinister aspects of this persecution is that it has so deteriorating an effect even on the Orthodox. They are encouraged by the clergy and police in a hateful system of espionage. Archbishop AMBROSE of Kharkov, one of the most thorough of the Inquisitors, has openly asked his people to report to their priests any suspicious cases of heresy they may notice in their midst, leaving a life and death matter of this kind to the judgment of the most ignorant peasants in Europe. This Archbishop is credited with being a poet, and some of the most sublime efforts of his muse have been in defense of his Church. If we quote two verses from an effusion on the Stundists, said to be his, and authorized to be circulated among the peasantry, our readers will be able to judge the spirit that animates the highly-placed members of the Russian hierarchy. The Archbishop exclaims:

Cruel and dark as a demon,
He shuns all faithful Christians,
And crawls into darkest corners—
This enemy of God, the damned Stundist.

The thoughtless and harmless, who near
The den of this malignant beast,
Are befoulded with blasphemies and slanders,
And cajoled by the damned Stundist.[1]

[1] There are ten verses of this violent rubbish. The poem bears the official *imprimatur* of the Ecclesiastical censor. It is entitled "The Damned Stundist," and its motto and superscription is, "If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

And still the government are uneasy, still they cry out for more victims and for harsher measures. More than one conference of Churchmen has been called to consider what stronger measures should be adopted to utterly eradicate the Stundist heresy. For it still grows, and grows, and cannot be killed. A Stundist is now an outlaw; his children are no longer his own; he is excluded from all village life and activity; his passport bears a mark of infamy; he dare not employ an Orthodox servant, nor is he permitted to serve an Orthodox master. Even when dead the vengeance of the Church follows him, for his body is to be cast into the grave, away from the consecrated earth that holds the bones of his fathers.

CHAPTER IX.

Internal Organization.

It can hardly be expected that Stundism, springing from the midst of the most ignorant and debased peasantry in Europe, should not exhibit a number of the blemishes which are the inevitable outcome of its lowly origin. As a well-known Russian writer in a Moscow paper says: "Stundism springs from the lowest *strata* of our peasants, from people who have no land, who are poverty-stricken, who have no authority in our village communes." With such material from which to draw its supplies, and further hindered by the melancholy circumstance that only a minute proportion of the Russian peasantry can read and write, it is no wonder that the Stundist movement at first sight seems to be altogether lacking in method and order. But even were every other circumstance in its favor, the fact that its growth from its earliest beginnings onward has been unscrupulously interfered with by Church and State, and every effort made to unite its scattered parts thwarted, will go far to account for the seeming want of cohesion which its most thorough admirers must confess is the grave drawback of the movement.

But notwithstanding all the apparent confusion, all the lack of concentration, the Stundists have actually done wonders in the matter of organization, and their chaotic condition is more apparent than real. Arising out of the present conditions of Russian peasant life there is a certain characteristic which tends to keep the widely-scattered

Stundist communities in close touch with one another. We allude to the inveterate love of wandering about from place to place implanted in every Russian's breast. This in itself leads to a rough sort of organization. Each leading Stundist in the country knows and has visited nearly every other leader and maintains with all his comrades a fairly regular correspondence. This was also, as far as we can learn, the method pursued by the earliest founders of Christianity, and it seems the only possible method in countries cursed with persecution and ignorance.

The epistles of the Stundist leaders have been quite as effective in their way as the epistles of the early apostles, and much of the *esprit* and energy that characterize their body is due to the influence of these writings—writings that pass on from hand to hand, from village to village, from province to province, until they are frayed, and worn out, and illegible. Were it not all so pathetic it would be amusing to note how the Scriptural style is paraphrased by the Stundist teachers. A letter in our possession addressed to "The Church at T——," an insignificant village in the province of Kief, begins thus: "To the beloved in Christ, the brethren of the church in T——, greeting." And then it warns them: "See, brethren, that as your church has sounded for ten years as with the voice of a trumpet that that sound be not silenced." Another epistle, to the church in P——, tells the brethren there that they "must gird their loins for the great fight. For the enemy will rejoice in your weakness, and if you set not your house in order, great will be the confusion and the danger. See that your elders be men well spoken of, and do not forget the poor and the oppressed when you assemble together on the Lord's Day."

It was early felt by Karl Bonekemper, Ratushni, Riaboshapka, and others of the first founders of Stundism, that without some sort of organization the movement would be in danger of losing much of its vigor. It is to the first-named of

these that Stundism owes much of its present cohesiveness. He began with the Russian villages in the immediate neighborhood of his own colony of Rohrbach, and selecting the man who, in his judgment, was the fittest and most popular, ordained him presbyter of the locality. As the movement spread into all the corners of the province of Kherson the work of the first presbyter got beyond all control, and Bonekemper calling a number of the leading spirits to Rohrbach, five or six more presbyters and deacons were ordained, and the country over which Stundism had then spread was so parcelled out among them, that each had the district for which he was peculiarly adapted. But it was soon discovered that office-bearers appointed in this way did not give general satisfaction. There was a universal desire among the Stundists that each community should have a voice in the appointment of its own preacher. This was exactly what Bonekemper wished, and from that time forward nearly all of the Stundist elders, deacons, and other officers have been elected by the communities they serve.

Roughly speaking, it may be said that the Stundists possess two officers—the *deacon*, serving one community, and the *presbyter*, one or more. The deacon is to a certain extent a subordinate officer; but a man need not serve as a deacon before his appointment as presbyter. Both deacon and presbyter must be men of tact, discretion, and skill in the settlement of disputed points. They are expected, moreover, to be men exceptionally well versed in the Scriptures, and gifted with considerable exegetical power. The possession of special oratorical talent is not much regarded—it is the possession of nearly every Stundist we have met. The duties of deacon and presbyter often overlap; but in general terms they may be thus stated. The deacon conducts divine service in the absence of the presbyter, and also manages the Sunday-school, where one exists. All the church books are in his keeping; records of births, deaths, marriages;

lists of the poor needing assistance, and of the well-to-do who are willing to assist. He is usually a young man for whose zeal this outlet has been found. The presbyter is a man of greater experience in affairs, looked up to by the whole district, whose decisions are held in the highest respect. His immediate duties are the conduct of public worship, and of services connected with deaths and marriages. He must visit frequently all the villages in his district where the brethren may be scattered, and this in such a cautious way as not to excite the suspicion of the authorities. The cash accounts of the various communities are usually kept by him, and from time to time he gives an account of his management of the funds to the assembled brethren or their delegates.

One of the most important duties of the presbyter is to conduct a correspondence with the presbyters of other districts, and to be the medium between any brethren he may know who are in gaol or in exile and their relatives. Of course, strict adherence to these arrangements is not always obtained, but this is a sketch of the model which is generrally sought after, and which is most popular.[1] It should be added that ordination by laying on of hands is not always the rule among the Stundists; and the further remark will also be useful, that neither in dress nor in occupation is a Stundist presbyter or deacon to be distinguished from his fellows. His dress is that of the ordinary peasants of his neighborhood, and his occupation is generally tilling the soil. He receives no stipend of any description, except an occasional allowance for traveling expenses.

There is no such thing among the Stundists as courts of

[1] Our remarks on the details of the organization of Stundist communities deal with the normal position of the affairs of this body. Within the last three years, however, the persecution has been so fierce, and the consequent internal disorder so complete, that at the present moment it can hardly be said that the Stundists have any well-ordered communities at all.

appeal. The Presbyterian system of session, synod and general assembly, with their several appellate jurisdictions, has nothing at all answering to it among the Russian Prottestants. Nor is it at all likely that questions could arise among them calling for the exercise of the authority of a theological court. As we shall have occasion later on to show, Stundist theology is an exceedingly simple affair, and requires no buttressing with the authority of ecclesiastical courts. If a Stundist presbyter is deemed unsound on some doctrine held by the body as an essential, he is first warned and then excluded from communion. If he is a strong man, he takes his community with him, and the community is then known by his name. Among these Russian brethren quite a number of such off-shoots exist—all of them sound on the great central truths of Christianity, but differing on what most sensible people agree in considering non-essentials.

CHAPTER X.

Religious and Social Ideas.—I.

"THE Bible and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," is a saying attributed to an English divine of the last century. The Stundists are probably more circumscribed still. The New Testament, and the New Testament alone, is the religion of Stundists. Theoretically, they pay the same reverence to both Old and New Testaments; practically, the New Testament is their only rule of faith and conduct. It is in an especial degree for them the Word of God; its precepts are not antiquated or obsolete; it is God's latest and only revelation to man, in which the plan of salvation is unfolded. This is probably the most important article of the Stundist creed, and it is held with a firmness that almost amounts to a passion. No Stundist is without a New Testament; most of them carry it about with them at their work; and in moments of relaxation, when the ordinary Orthodox peasant seeks the village drink-shop, the Stundist retires to some quiet spot to study his "Yevangeliye." It is no common knowledge he possesses of it: he is deeply read in the oracles of God; he feels that men like himself—common workmen, fishermen, tent-cloth weavers, carpenters—were the men chosen by God as the vehicles of His Spirit, and that it is a revelation in all ways suited to his wants, and written for such as he is.

It follows from this that the other great Evangelical doctrine of the right of every man to interpret Scripture for himself is also tenaciously held by the Stundists. Not

the Church, not a priest or a commentator, but each individual man has the right and incurs the duty to search the Scriptures for himself. A—I—, a presbyter of the province of Bessarabia, once wrote to us, "We have only one duty on earth—to put ourselves into harmony with God's will concerning us. How are we to know God's will? He has revealed it in the New Testament, and in so far as we are negligent in finding out that will of God, so far do we defeat the end for which He has placed us here. We hold, therefore, that constant meditation on the Scriptures enables us to live after the pattern of Christ, and to glorify and enjoy our Maker." Our readers will agree with us that these are very noble words coming from an unlettered peasant of the Russian steppes. They clearly indicate, also, the attitude of his community towards the Scriptures.

It will be hardly necessary to go into any detail as to the positive side of the Stundist belief. The Stundists are Evangelical Protestants pure and simple, and their creed is the creed of our English Protestantism. Of course, it must be expected that with such an origin Stundism lacks homogeneity, and this to such an extent that one is inclined to regret, what one never regrets in England, that a logical creed, accepted by all as authoritative, has never been drawn up by any council of Stundist elders. Much of the present confusion might have been thereby avoided. For example, perhaps nearly one-third of these Russian Protestants hold to adult baptism, and a small remnant reject baptism altogether. As to the Lord's Supper, the prevalent feeling is one against its sacrificial efficacy. The notions of a Eucharist and of a Mass repel every Stundist. "This do in remembrance of Me," is sufficient for most of them, and the doctrines of transubstantiation and consubstantiation are equally opposed to their understanding of the Gospel narrative. A small remnant refuses to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and have substituted the breaking of bread. Other differences

are noticeable in such matters as predestination, the final perseverance of the saints, the office and work of the Holy Spirit and the origin of sin; but, notwithstanding all this, we repeat that, broadly speaking, the Russian Stundists are Evangelicals of a most pronounced type.

We prefer rather to turn to the negative or Protestant side of the Stundist belief, and to show what it is in the Orthodox Church that has repelled these sturdy peasants, and from which they have separated themselves. We will begin with icon and cross worship. Those who have not been to Russia can form no idea of the prominent place this superstition occupies in the religious life of the people. Every peasant's cottage—the very poorest even—has one or two of the painted representations of Divine beings, the Saviour, the Virgin, God the Father, or some of the principal saints. They are hung up in all public offices, from the ecclesiastical consistory to the bureau of petty police official; they are before your eyes in banks, merchants' offices, shops, railway stations, steamboats, drinking shops. The thief's den and the brothel have their icons. To their icon peasant and noble do obedience; before them they prostrate themselves in prayer. The people call them "God," and burn holy oil before them. If happiness is a Russian's lot in life, he ascribes it all to the icon; if misfortune follow him, it is because he has omitted some duty towards it—either the oil has not been replenished, or the frame has not been kept bright, or he has sworn or got drunk in its presence.

Favorite icons in churches receive the adoration of thousands, and are prayed to in every emergency of life. Icons follow the armies on their march, and victory is always sure when they are propitious. This is idolatry pure and simple, but it is, nevertheless, a vital part of the national sentiment. The courage, therefore, of the Stundists, isolated and unprotected peasants, in rebelling against this, in raising their voices against the national degradation, is worthy of the

highest praise. We find no parallel to it in the history of religious revolts. It is their detestation of icon worship which, more than anything else, has brought them into such sore trouble.[1] Probably they have gone too far in their sometimes intemperate zeal. Perhaps they would have been more prudent had they considered more fully the reverence for the icon deep planted in the Russian heart, before they permitted themselves certain acts of iconoclasm, always brought up when the priests desire to inflame the Orthodox peasantry against them. Be this as it may, they deserve credit for acting up to their convictions; and opportunism, or concession, or compromise in these matters, which to the Stundist are so vital, would be absolutely hateful and opposed to every dictate of his conscience.

Another tremendous power in Russia, and against which the Stundists have steadily set their faces, is sacerdotalism. "Each man," writes Eli Rutkevitch, "is, if you like, the priest of his own household; but there is no longer a sacrifice needed; there is no longer an earthly intercessor necessary; Divine justice is satisfied, and we are reconciled to God by that One Sacrifice which was once and for all offered on the Cross." There is, perhaps, nothing peculiar in this attitude of the Stundists, as Rutkevitch expresses it, to distinguish their views on sacerdotalism from those of Evangelical Protestants in England; but there is, nevertheless, a fundamental distinction in actual practice.

The Stundist holds that a body of separate clergy, set apart for clerical or ministerial work, is an excrescence on the Church. "I don't know much about history," writes the Stundist already quoted, "but I have always understood, and my own experience agrees with this, that when men,

[1] The penal code of Russia contains several clauses dealing with "crimes" against icons and similar objects. Disrespectful language about an icon is punishable with eight months to three years' imprisonment, and the willful destruction of an icon with banishment to Siberia for life.

sinners in every respect like other men, are set apart for the exclusive performance of ministerial work, they surely degenerate. They arrogate to themselves powers and functions which are the right of every Christian father of a family; and they assume a sanctimonious bearing as though in reality their lives were purer and their thoughts more heavenly than other people's." In general, it may be stated that Stundists do not hold the usually received notion, that it is desirable to maintain a distinct ministerial office. Their presbyters and deacons, as we have had occasion already to observe, are in no way to be distinguished from other members of the body. Now in Russia clericalism and sacerdotalism are rampant. The clergy form a distinct caste by themselves, entrance to which from outside sections of society is almost impossible. Although on account of his ignorance and drunkenness the village pope is held in the most utter contempt, he is, nevertheless, associated with the people in every one of those functions by which they set such store; and however much a Russian may despise his priests he will never neglect to pay his tithes, and have the holy father into the house with his cross and holy water at Easter and Christmas time.

It is chiefly in the villages that the Russian priest most abuses his position. Here he is a drunken lout generally, not a whit removed from the most ordinary peasant in intelligence or in ideal. He barters what ought to be the sacred offices of the Church, but in his hands are not, for the copecks of his flock; and in their direst extremity of poverty has often been known to withhold the sacrament itself until a larger fee was forthcoming. The Stundist revolted against this. From one hateful extreme always before his eyes, he has perhaps approached the other extreme. We have here the secret of the priest's hatred of him. Refusing to pay dues to men of this stamp, denouncing in season, and, perhaps, out of season, the sordid, grasping man who

asserts spiritual authority over him; his own life the sternest reproof that the priest can have, is it any wonder that Stundist and pope are embittered enemies, and that the priest with all power and authority in his hands, resorts to those terrible reprisals, that policy of persecution which has of late years so stained the Russian Church?

CHAPTER XI.

Religious and Social Ideas.—II.

We discussed in our last chapter the attitude of the Stundists towards the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, pointing out that Stundism was peculiarly a New Testament religion, purely evangelical in its character, but with many unimportant divergencies from the accepted standards of Evangelicism as they are held in this country. We next showed how the hostile attitude of the Protestants towards some of the most dearly-cherished notions of their Orthodox fellow-countrymen, for instance, towards icon worship and the office of the priest, did more to make them detested than any mere assertion of the positive side of their creed. It will help to explain the position of the Stundists if we proceed to give a few more examples of the corrupt and useless institutions of Church and State against which they never cease to lift up their voices.

Anyone who knows anything about Russia knows about the one hundred and three *prazdniki* or holidays of the ecclesiastical year. Most of them are saints' days, or the birthdays of Imperial personages, and they are distinguished throughout the entire empire as days on which a man may get drunk with impunity, and when work is to be carefully avoided. These are the days when the gala performances are given at theatre and *café chantant*, when the *kabaki* and brothels are fullest, when the drunken lout has a sort of special license to lie about the street unmolested by the police. Morally and religiously these holidays are a farce,

notwithstanding the magnificent services in the churches which begin them; from the industrial point of view they are, of course, ruinous. The Stundists will have none of them, and perhaps somewhat too ostentatiously drives out his team of oxen to plough on the day consecrated to John the Baptist or Mary Magdalene. The Russian, naturally lazy, with a natural tendency, moreover, to debauch, longs for a *prazdnik* to come round; and when he sees a set of men rise up and denounce what is to him the bright spot in existence, he has no tolerance for such men, and the worst names in his vocabulary of abuse are flung at them.

Vodka drinking is another of the terrible national evils under which Russia groans, and against which the Stundist has sternly set his face. The old *Raskolniki* who defended drinking and denounced smoking on the ground that it was not that which entered into the man that defiled him, but that which cometh out, have raised many a laugh at their ingenious perversion of Scripture. The Stundist, however, raises no laugh, his views are not to be trifled with. In his opposition to *vodka* and tobacco he takes the highest religious and moral grounds, and fiercely denounces the miserable *mujiki*, who are slaves to drink, as well as the system of government or administration which makes the shame of the people one of the surest and largest sources of the Imperial revenue.

The Stundist is a thinking, enlightened man, with clear notions about questions that are at present agitating the world. In this respect he is as different as possible from his Orthodox neighbor, who is generally a bovine-minded man, with brutal instincts and little outlook beyond to-day. The Stundist reads everything he can lay his hands on—old newspapers and magazines, books on agriculture, cookery books, books of household medicine; and he has formed fairly distinct notions on most things he reads about. If you visit a village where Orthodox and Stundists live together, you

can nearly always pick out the Stundist. He is cleaner, brighter, more alert. His clothes look smarter, his hair is cut shorter, his beard is trimmed or shaven. And if you enter their houses the difference is still more marked. Cleanliness and neatness in place of dirt and disorder. The children are tidy, the housewife does not shrink away in terrified bashfulness, but greets you with ease, and as though she had equal rights in the house with her husband. The food is placed before you in vessels, not tumbled out on the table; you have spoons and knives given you, and many another comfort is in store for you. In a word, the Stundist is on a higher plane of civilization than his Orthodox neighbor. This, of course, is quite sufficient to condemn him. His trimmed beard and square-cut jacket are traced to German influences, and the fact that he keeps his children tidy and his cottage clean is only another proof that he is unpatriotically leaving the ways of his ancestors to follow after the manners and customs of the enemy of his fatherland.

The position of women and children in a Stundist household is worthy of attention. To a very great extent the patriarchal form of family government still prevails in Russia. It is hardly too much to say that the head of the household rules absolutely and autocratically, or that he possesses the power of inflicting death on child or wife who is disobedient or unfaithful. The children stand around in fear and trembling in the presence of their father, the wife rises on his entrance, is seated only when he permits it, and her portion at meals is what he leaves or refuses. The Stundist has altered all this. His wife is his helpmate and bosom friend, with share in his joy and trouble. She is his sister in the assembly for worship. Her voice may be heard there in praise or prayer. She sits down with him at the same Lord's Table, and, with equal rights acknowledged before God, the Stundist husband would never think of curtailing her rights

or slighting her position in his own household. It rarely happens that a Stundist inflicts corporal punishment on his children. The law of love is the law of his home.

The Stundist does not go to the New Testament for his theology alone. He finds there a system of morals, and a series of distinct precepts for regulating the social duties of individuals and of States. Christ's precepts were uttered and enjoined because they were in Christ's opinion capable of fulfillment, and those best suited to the needs of the world; and they are not to be rejected simply because of some fancied difference between our time and the time of the disciples. If our environment, and traditions, and system of education, and method of government unfit us for carrying out Christ's behests to the letter, it is a proof, not that Christ was impracticable, or too ideal, but that our systems and environments want readjustment or total abolition. The military system, according to the Stundists, is nothing else than the recognition of brute force as the final arbiter in human affairs. A soldier is a hired assassin, no matter how you may gild over his horrible occupation by calling it patriotic, or by calling in the priest to consecrate his bloody battle-flags. The bureaucratic system, like militarism, takes multitudes of men away from useful labor and places them in positions of authority that no man should fill who is not wholly pure, patient, and incorruptible. "We know what the *tchinovniki* are," wrote a Stundist once to us; "there is hardly one of them, especially of those with whom *we* come in contact, who is not thoroughly corrupt, and open to the pettiest bribe. We will not bribe them; their occupation is a detestable one, in which no honest man should engage." Holding such views about the officials, is it any wonder that the Stundists receive small mercy at their hands?

The New Testament, moreover, regulates the political economy of the Stundists. Usury, profit, interest, wages, rent—if in practice the Stundist cannot separate himself

from these symptoms of a corrupt economic state of affairs, he believes that the community at large is injured by accepting them as in the nature of things, and as indispensable to the carrying on of commercial intercourse. "The Lord gives His people the earth and its fullness," lately wrote a Stundist leader, "we are all equal in His sight, and the fulness of the earth is as much mine as yours, as much yours as mine. If you take for yourself alone what is intended for all, you commit a sin against your fellows, and seek to frustrate the purposes of God." And again, "If I, seeing my brother in extremity, come to him with my abundance, and give freely, and if he does the same for me when I need it, we fulfill the law of Christ; but if in his necessity I say that I will only *lend* him something, and bind him down to repay me that, and more that I have not lent, I wrong my brother, and take a mean advantage of his weakness."

CHAPTER XII.

Politico-Social Ideas.

It is not only a Stundist's cottage and the appearance of his wife and children that indicate how alive he is to the influence of the modern *Zeit-geist.* If we study the industrial lives of those Stundists who are not agriculturists, and who are therefore free to adopt improvements on ancient methods of work, we notice at once the difference between the new school and the old. The Stundist is remarkable for his receptivity, the Orthodox peasant is fanatically wedded to the ways of his fathers. And, even in purely agricultural communities, where least scope is given to new methods, and where any departure from received standards and old-time customs is jealously watched, the Stundist is alive to the folly of the Russian communal system of land tenure, and the communal system of rotation; he seeks to improve his allotment; he seeks better implements, more order, a less wasteful system. Imitating the Germans, with their flourishing little patches of fruit and flower garden, he endeavors to cleanse the yard around his cottage, to extirpate the weeds in his garden, to plant trees for shade, and use, and beauty, to rear some simple flowers that will rejoice the hearts of his children and women-folk. We have been assured by reliable witnesses who have traveled about among the mixed Orthodox and Stundist villages of the province of Kherson, that nearly everywhere the Stundists attempt in some such way as we have described to make

their surroundings less squalid-looking, to invest their toilsome lives with some simple, beautiful things.

Nothing about the Stundists is more remarkable than the attention they pay to acquiring the knowledge of reading and writing. Notwithstanding the attempts that have been made in recent years to spread the rudiments of education among the Russian peasants, the melancholy fact remains that probably not more than ten per cent. of them can read and write. The Orthodox peasant, as a rule, does not feel it any disgrace to be ignorant of the knowledge of reading. He is as good as his neighbor, and even if he were able to read, what good would it do him? He has no career open to him. He has no books or newspapers, and no desire to possess them. With the Stundist it is far otherwise. His standard of comparison is not his Russian neighbor, more probably he measures himself with the German colonist. Freed from the thraldom of the Church, his mind divinely enlightened, he seeks food and replenishment. The oracles of God are within the covers of the book in his hand; it is his bounden duty and his greatest pleasure to obtain a knowledge of them, and he remembers that if he remains in darkness he cannot instruct others. Where his opportunities allow of it he is an omnivorous reader, We know of several Stundists who possess from fifty to one hundred volumes—mostly, of course, books of a religious character, but several treating of travel, history and elementary science.

It is probably too much to say that the majority of Stundists have any clear notions about civil government and the relative duties of rulers and subjects. The charge of disloyalty is frequently brought against them, the charge of being Anarchists, as well. There is no shadow of foundation for these charges. They are loyal sons of Russia, none the less loyal because they see so many grave blemishes in the government of their country, and pray for their reform. In a country where the press is dragooned, where the censor

is omnipotent, where even an Orthodox clergyman dare not preach one of his colorless prelections without first submitting it to his superiors for approval, the boldness of the Stundist in calling in question blots that neither press nor priest dare as much as to allude to, is easily made to appear by interested persons as gross disloyalty to Czar and fatherland. But even if we take as fact the worst that their enemies say about them, what does it all amount to? Goaded by their adversaries into sharp retort, the Stundists have often enough brought trouble on themselves by having their heated and occasionally exaggerated remarks put down to the discredit of their community. Distinguished advocates of Orthodoxy have laboriously collected isolated instances of such indiscreet speech, in order to work deadly injury to the New Protestantism which they so justly fear. By drawing public attention to these outbursts, they have sought to justify the present persecution policy of the government. We are combating, they allege, a dangerous body of Communists and Anarchists, who are seeking to destroy the greatest and holiest institutions of the country.

Perhaps we should not pass over this branch of our subject without noticing a few of the social doctrines attributed to the Stundists by their enemies. We will thus be able to see them from the point of view of the persecutor, and, beside, allowing for all exaggeration of statement, we will be able to get a glimpse of much that is simmering in Stundists' minds. A writer in the Ekaterinoslav Diocesan Reporter states that the Stundists on every possible occasion endeavor to impress on their hearers that "All men should be free gentlemen," and that the two cardinal principles of a State should be the equality and liberty of its citizens. M. Chepurni, writing on this subject, says: "The Stundists honor Christ alone; only Christ is to be reckoned as an Elder Brother—all other men are equal."

The organ of the Kherson Ecclesiastical Consistory gives

the opinion of the Stundist leader, Nikit Pukhovoi—evidently a socialist—as follows: "With the destruction of the existing order of things everything will be possessed in common; shops and stores containing silks and other articles will be open to all, and whoever wants may have what he likes without payment." It is evident that the notion of a more equitable division of the land of the country has taken root in the minds of a good many Stundists. M. Znatchko-Yavorski, a distinguished economist and landowner of the province of Kherson, describes the communistic ideas which he alleges are prevalent among the Protestants in the neighborhood of his estates. "Jesus Christ suffered," they say, "for the whole human race, consequently His love for all was alike. It follows from this that the blessings of this world should be equally distributed among the people; and as property and land are such blessings, it follows that they should be equally divided among all living men."

A writer in the *Nedelia* puts these words into the mouth of a Stundist, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, saith the Lord. Let him only who works eat. But as man cannot create anything by his own labor, as, for instance, land, water, rocks, animals, plants, which are the works of God's hands, it follows that human beings have not the right to count these things their own private property. They are God's gifts, God's blessings. The land should be divided in accordance with men's necessities." Another writer, M. Rojdesvenski, a man who has done more than any other to spread broadcast the most erroneous views about the Stundists, thus sums up their social and political views: "In place of the disestablished Orthodox doctrines, the Stundists give us doctrines in which we can discover neither completeness nor accuracy, neither clearness nor system. Pulling down the existing social-political fabric of Russian life, they please themselves with substituting Utopias. Their leaders may perhaps succeed in developing the negative side of their

belief, for to demolish is incomparably easier than to build up."

We can read between the lines of all this, and see a simple striving after truth, or, at worst, a profound dissatisfaction with the existing order of things. It is only in Russia where such views could be deemed heinous and criminal, or where the holders of them could be made liable to social ostracism and cruel punishment. We may, of course, hope and pray for a brighter day to dawn on that utterly benighted land; at present we see no glimmerings even of light. Or is it that the darkness now brooding over Russia is the dark hour before the dawn?

CHAPTER XIII.

Services.

STUNDIST meetings are not held in structures exclusively set apart for the purpose; nor, as often as not, are there any of the fixtures or furniture to be seen which we are accustomed to associate with the celebration of divine service. Poverty, simplicity, austerity are the characteristics of a Stundist meeting-place. There is a whitewashed room, scrupulously clean; on the walls are perhaps two or three Scripture texts on cardboard; at one end of the room is a little table and a stool for the preacher—the table covered with a white cloth; a few rough benches and stools are placed for the congregation; the floor is earthen; the roof is held up with wattles and rude rafters. It is a room in a peasant's hut which has been cleared of its bedding, or dairy utensils or sacks of grain, lent every Sunday morning to the brethren for their worship.

Lying on the table are a New Testament and hymn-book. The hymn-book is one of three collections—"The Voice of Faith," "The Joyful Songs of Zion," or "Spiritual Songs." From what we have already stated about the theology of the Stundists our readers will expect that the reading and study of the New Testament form the principal part of the ordinary service. It is seldom that a chapter is read unaccompanied by a running commentary of considerable exegetical merit. But although the reading and explanation of Scripture is an important part of the service, the singing of their peculiar hymns can hardly be said to occupy a subordinate place.

The Little Russians, among whom the New Protestantism has found its chief adherents, are inordinately fond of music, most of them being gifted with an excellent voice and a keen sense of harmony. Hymn after hymn will be given out, and outsiders who have been present at the Stundist services of song are united in their praise of their effectiveness, and of the simple and beautiful manner in which most of the hymns are rendered. A good many of the "Joyful Songs," and other hymns in use at Stundist gatherings, are more or less rough translations from German and English originals, from Mr. Sankey's collection in an especial degree. Those that are of Russian origin are in their way most peculiar productions, and deserve more attention than has been yet bestowed on them. One in particular, a hymn to the Holy Spirit, we must find space for. It is rough, too ecstatic probably for cold Western natures, the work, doubtless, of some unlettered peasant.

O Holy Ghost, my light! May Thy beams illumine my soul,
Thou art the promised of Christ.
I shall be eternally with Thee.

O Holy Ghost, my God! Strengthen me with Thy might,
Remove my hidden sins, and give me gladness.
Thou art mine to-day.

O Holy Ghost, my joy! Shield me by Thy strength.
Shield me from my own works.
Thou art mine eternally.

O Holy Ghost, my love! Abide with me to-night,
Conquer within me the Prince of this world,
For the sake of Thy love. AMEN.

The Stundists pray kneeling. Their prayers are long, often full of repetitions, and seldom unaccompanied by tears. Their attitude in prayer is one of the most abject humility before God, and of unsparing self-examination and self-depreciation. It would seem as though they held that

mourning for sin should be the chief subject of prayer. Seldom such a note is heard in their public devotions as thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies. All the joy of their Christian experience, its fervor, its ecstasy, is voiced in their hymns; their humility, their deep dejection in their prayers.

M. Komarov, a well-known writer on the Stundists, thus describes a meeting at which he was present. It is a fairly just account, and may be taken as descriptive of an ordinary meeting. "When the sectaries assemble they saluted one another with, 'How are you, brother, or sister?' giving their hand, the men kissing the men, and the women the women. If a Baptist is present he only gives his hand. After mutual greetings they seat themselves, the men on one side, the women on the other. . . . The presbyter then takes his place at the table, and turning to the congregation, says: 'We shall open the meeting in the name of Jesus Christ by singing hymn, number ——.' The presbyter commences the tune. When the singing ends the presbyter takes the New Testament, and, selecting a chapter, reads and explains it. A passage is usually selected more or less bearing on the hymn they have just been singing. As soon as the presbyter has finished his comments he asks those present if they have anything to add to his remarks. Those who wish take this opportunity of expressing their views. Women are not permitted to explain the Scriptures in public meetings. After more prayers and hymn-singing, the meeting is closed by the presbyter repeating the Lord's Prayer."

It is customary with the Stundists to remain together for an hour or so after the service. It is a sort of social gathering, where they talk over their farm affairs, and any other matters of interest. News is passed from one to another, and any one in possession of a newspaper, or of a letter from some brother in prison or exile, reads it aloud.

With reference to baptism and the Lord's Supper, there

is nothing in Stundist methods of celebrating them that calls for any special remarks, the Russian Protestants having adopted the simple ritual of Western Evangelical churches.

A Stundist marriage service, however, is in its way a unique affair, and is entitled to a word of description. On the appointed day, the parents of the bridegroom invite the presbyter and their relatives and friends to their house. When all the guests are assembled, the young people are led by their parents to the presbyter, who is informed that the youth and maiden now before him desire to be joined in marriage. The presbyter then takes his place at a table, and requests the bride and bridegroom to stand before him. He first turns to the bride.

"Thou, girl, is it of thine own free will that thou art joined in marriage to this youth, or is it that some one is forcing thee, thy parents or some relative?"

The girl replies: "It is of mine own free wish."

"And dost thou love the youth?"

"I love him."

"And wilt thou love him and care for him when he is old and sick?"

"I will," she replies.

The presbyter then turns to the bridegroom with the same questions, and when these are satisfactorily answered he reads hymn No. 84 in the "Spiritual Songs." The hymn, really a prayer, is much in these words; "Thou, O Lord, hast created the visible world in six days. Thou hast made man, and saw that it was not good for him to be alone. For him thou madst woman, and hast blest their union of love, and hast directed them to be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And now these two here before Thee desire Thy blessing on their union. Bless them, O Lord; bless their married life. Make them happy and holy as our first parents were in Paradise." The bride and bridegroom

are then commanded to kiss one another, and to join hands. The ceremony is ended.[1]

A Stundist burial is usually a very impressive service. When the body has been placed in the coffin the friends of the dead stand near, and the presbyter reads the magnificent verses from I Cor. xv., beginning, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." The coffin is then carried out of the house, and at the door a pause is made while a verse or two of a suitable hymn is sung. On the way to the grave the presbyter walks immediately behind the coffin, carrying an open Testament in his hands. Behind him are the men, and following them the women. The men walk with uncovered heads, no matter what the state of the weather may be. At the grave-side the presbyter slowly recites, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." A short address follows, and the body is lowered into the grave. No crosses or tombstones mark the graves of Stundists, and latterly they have not been permitted to bury their dead in consecrated ground.

[1] Marriages among Stundists, conducted as we have described, are illegal. Stundists to be legally married must have had the ceremony performed in the Orthodox Church by an Orthodox priest.

CHAPTER XIV.

Present Condition and Future Prospects.

We have now arrived at the conclusion of these sketches descriptive of the history, progress, and inner life of probably the most remarkable religious movement since the Reformation. From its earlier beginnings, exactly thirty-five years ago, in an insignificant German colony, from the conversion of the Russian peasant Onishenko, the seeds of native Protestantism have taken firm root, and have spread outwards and upwards into a mighty growth. We have followed the course of the wonderful movement from village to village and from province to province, from the notable day when the light came to the simple peasant of Osnova, until we could number its adherents at a quarter of a million. Indeed, in placing the number of Stundists at this figure, we have in all probability underestimated them M. Dalton, a Lutheran clergyman, long resident in St. Petersburg, and whose knowledge of religious movements in Russia is very considerable, goes so far as to say that they are two millions strong.

But it is not alone to the actual number of professing Stundists that we are to look in estimating the force and extent of the movement which they have inaugurated in Russia. The idea which first found a place in the minds and souls of a few peasants in the province of Kherson, although its progress and growth has always been accompanied by persecution of a most infamous description, has now gained its first recognition; although its adherents are

scorned and flouted, their belief has become a subject of popular discussion, and is largely in the minds of the multitude. Compared with the enormous population of the Russian empire, the number of Stundists, whether two millions or only a quarter of a million, is insignificant; but the *spirit* of Stundism has spread, and is still spreading into regions as ultra-Orthodox as the heart of the most bigoted Greek Churchman could desire, and is slowly but surely leavening the whole mass. If we consider what the religious life of Russia promises to be, and compare this with what it was a quarter of a century ago, we must thank Stundism for the altered state of affairs. There is still room for enormous reforms—indeed, only the fringe of the matter has been touched; but what little has been done is largely owing to the new spirit of which the pious Bible readers of the Southern steppes were the means of breathing into the national sentiment.

In the light of the Stundist revival it was soon seen that the old village clergy were utterly unable to cope with the healthful spirit of enquiry that was abroad; it was soon noticed that they were depraved, ignorant, sordid; it was seen that the church services were conducted in a manner that left everything to be desired, and that the absence of preaching was a grave evil to be remedied; it was felt that the village schools required overhauling; it gradually dawned on the Church that something must be done to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath; it became a pious endeavor of the local authorities to diminish the curse of drunkenness, which was working such havoc in the villages. These are some of the ideas which the Stundists aroused, and which have gone circling and rippling into remote regions of the empire where Stundism has never been thought of. And if we turn to the other dissenting bodies in Russia, and especially to those of them who in their early history were identified with spiritual life, as distinguished from the Dissenters whose

dissent was only a matter of ritual, we find that the Stundists have been more than influential—they have simply revivified them. The voices of the Stundist martyrs from their prisons and places of exile in Siberia and the Caucasus, and the patient heroism of their lives amidst the cruellest persecution, have stirred sects like the Molokans as a trumpet-call stirs a soldier. It is, however, impossible to do more than allude to some of the direct and indirect efforts of this great movement. And the very fact already alluded to, that high and low in all parts of the empire are talking rationally about the Stundists, and discussing their peculiar views, may do far more to bring about the wished-for day of freedom than the most eloquent appeals on behalf of liberty addressed to the Czar or to the Holy Synod.

At the present time there seems little sign of the dawn of that bright day. The persecution has never raged more cruelly than at present; the state of terrorism has never been more pitiable. Lynx-eyed police, and priests and Orthodox missioners with the cunning of foxes, abound in the villages inhabited by Stundists. Their object is no secret—it is to trample out every vestige of Dissent wherever it appears. We have already described their loathsome procedure, and have seen that nothing is too mean for them in the carrying out of their revolting programme. The Stundists are, in a great degree, panic-stricken and disorganized, and if we are to take their present condition as an indication of what will be, should the fires of persecution continue, the outlook for Russian Protestantism is gloomy enough. But will the persecution continue? Already there are signs that the State is getting tired of acting as drill-sergeant of the Church. It is beginning to feel that the bitter cry of the Church for secular aid is nothing else than a confession of her impotence, and that any further concessions to the bigotry and ineptitude of the clergy may have the effect of surrounding the suffering Protestants with the halo of

martyrdom, and of alienating the people from sympathy with the Church. The Church may, indeed, for a time succeed, but we know that in calling on the secular arm to assist her she is seeking help from the very quarter by alliance with which most of her difficulties have sprung.

Now what are the prospects of the Stundists as a Church? There can be no doubt that within this community there are enormous powers of proselytizing zeal, held in present check by the drastic measures of the police and clergy. We would fain believe that the energy thus kept under must, in great measure, sooner or later, find vent for itself, and that a glorious future is yet in store for Stundism. But the serious question is: Is the persecution which the Stundists are now undergoing a purifying fire or the reverse? Will the young Protestant Church emerge from her troubles with sufficient spring, and made white in the fire, or will not the never-ending theological strife and the breaking up of the Church into warring sections—the sad results of the persecution—effectually turn the energies of the leaders into other channels than propagandism?

For our part, we believe there is little fear for the future of Stundism, if it is only true to itself, and to its noble ideals. It is just now passing through fiery ordeals both from without and from within; but it has a genius and a mission all its own, and we believe that, with the opportunity, it will in the future produce champions as doughty as those now in prison and in exile. Its strength is in its true Gospel message, and in the earnestness and passion of the messengers. Let us all hope and pray that the triumphs of the past thirty years will pale before the triumphs of the near future, and that the day is fast approaching when the mighty empire, of which the Stundists are the salt, will be drawn to seek and to serve the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

THEOLOGY LIBRARY
CLAREMONT, CALIF.
A 15716

Missionary Literature

THE one thing needful to open the heart of the Church so that its liveliest interest, its prayers and its money may be directed into the channels of Mission work at home and abroad, is that *information reach the people.* Pastors who are working along this line are realizing astonishing results. The Missionary Society is publishing in its Self-Supporting Literature Department tracts, leaflets and appeals which are sold and the proceeds used to print more.

Send for samples, and order for your people. They will buy them readily and be sure to read them.

Metlakahtla (abridged). Each 10 cts. Per hundred	$ 2 00
Coals of Fire from off the Missionary Altar. Twelve copies.	1 00
Five Hundred Years of Islam in Turkey. Per hundred	1 00
Translated from Malaysia. Per Thousand	1 00
Collection Books. Per Dozen	25
Blind David. Per Hundred	2 00
From Trowel to Pulpit. Per Hundred	75
Lassie Nell. Per Hundred	1 00
What Does It Cost. Per Hundred	50
The Religious State of the World. By Bishop Foster. Per Thousand	1 00
God's Tenth. Per Hundred	50
A Thrilling Story of Missions. Per Hundred	1 00
Epworth League Cards. Per Hundred	25
Conference Missionary Sermon. Per Hundred	2 00
Our Native Preachers. Per Thousand	1 00
Hindu Women and Their Homes. Per Hundred	1 00
The Story of Fiji. Each 10 Cents; per Dozen	1 00
Ling Ching Ting. Per Hundred	50
Concert Exercises:	
"His Heritage." Per Hundred	1 00
"The Triple Arch." Per Hundred	1 00
Joel Bulu. Each	35
Birthday Envelopes. Per Hundred	25
John Stewart, Pioneer Missionary of the M. E. Church. Per Hundred	2 00
Hindu Widowhood. Per Hundred	1 00
Catechism on Africa. Per Hundred	50
Missionary Dollar. Per Hundred	4 00
Romance of Modern Missions. Twenty-five Copies	75

The Importance of Winning China for Christ. By JOHN R. HYKES. Per Hundred ..... $ 1 00

The Life of Lord Shaftesbury. By JENNIE M. BINGHAM. Each, 10 Cents; Three Copies, 25 Cents; Twelve Copies 1 00

Sparks from the Anvil of a Busy Missionary. By Rev. T. J. SCOTT, D.D. Twenty-nine Years Missionary in India. Each 25

The Pastor's Missionary Manual. By Rev. JAMES MUDGE, D. D. Each 25

Wealth and Workmen, or the Mission of Men and Money. By HOWARD HENDERSON. Each 1 50

Songs of Redeeming Love. Each, 35 Cents. Per Hundred ... 30 00

Missionary Song Service, for Conference Anniversaries, Conventions and Mass Meetings. Per Hundred 1 00

Finest of the Wheat. Hymns for Missionary and Revival Meetings and Sabbath-schools. Edited by GEO. D. ELDERKIN for CHAPLAIN MCCABE. Each, 35 Cents; Per Hundred 30 00

Finest of the Wheat No. 2. Hymns for Missionary and Revival Meetings and Sabbath-schools. Edited by GEO. D. ELDERKIN, C. C. MCCABE, JNO. R. SWENEY, WM. J. KIRKPATRICK AND F. A. HARDIN. Each, 35 Cents; Per Hundred. 30 00

Willing Worker Cards. For Missionary Collection. Per Hundred 40

Collection Envelopes. For Missionary Collections. Per Hundred 25

Willing Offering Envelope. Per Hundred 1 00

World-Wide Missions can be furnished for distribution. Per Hundred 1 00

Not Interested in Foreign Missions. By Miss JOSEPHINE TYLER. Per Hundred 1 00

Missionary Maps. In Cloth, 12x6. $5.00 and 12.00

The Presiding Eldership from the Standpoint of Home Missions. By C. C. MCCABE. Per Hundred 25

A Trumpet Call From BISHOP THOBURN. Per Thousand..... 1 00

Mary Ashton, OR WHAT ONE YOUNG LADY HAS DONE FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS. Per Thousand..... 1 00

A Woman's Appeal for Missions. By Mrs. ISABELLA BISHOP. Per Thousand..... 2 00

Conference of Missionary Secretaries of Eighteen Denominations. Their Appeal to the Churches in behalf of Foreign Missions. Per Hundred 2 50

Please let the money accompany the order. Remittances may be made by draft, check or postal order, or for small amounts by postage stamps. *Please do not mix the money for these supplies with anything else; but upon this business, address,*

MISSIONARY SECRETARIES

150 Fifth Avenue, NEW YORK

Finest of the Wheat

EDITED BY GEO. D. ELDERKIN, C. C. McCABE, JNO. R. SWENEY,
WM. J. KIRKPATRICK, THE WHYTE BROTHERS OF CANADA AND F. A. HARDIN.

**The most popular
Song Book published**

"THERE IS NOT A POOR PIECE IN THE BOOK"

Finest of the Wheat No. 2

EDITED BY GEO. D. ELDERKIN, C. C. McCABE, JNO. R. SWENEY,
WM. J. KIRKPATRICK AND F. A. HARDIN.

**Pre-eminent among
Books of Gospel Music**

...PRICE OF NO. 1 OR NO. 2...

Single Copy, Postpaid, 35 Cents.
12 Copies, by Express, NOT PREPAID, - - - $ 3.60
100 Copies, by Express or Freight, NOT PREPAID, - 30.00

Finest of the Wheat Combined

PRICE—Single Copy, Postpaid, 50 Cents.
12 Copies, by Express, NOT PREPAID, - - - $ 5.40
100 Copies, by Express or Freight, NOT PREPAID, - 45.00

Song and Study for God's Little Ones

EDITED BY BERTHA F. VELLA, C. C. McCABE, D. B. TOWNER AND W. N. HARTSHORN.

**This book is the result of
many years' experience in
active Primary work**

THE TEACHER'S HELP AND THE CHILDREN'S JOY

PRICE 25 CENTS

12 Copies, by Express, NOT PREPAID, - - - $ 2.40
100 Copies, by Express or Freight, NOT PREPAID, - 20.00

R. R. McCABE & CO., PUBLISHERS

166 SOUTH CLINTON STREET
CHICAGO

15716

BX
9798
S8
S8

The Stundists; the story of a great religious revolt. Introd. by John Brown. New York, Self-Supporting Literature Dept. of the Methodist Episcopal Church [19--?]
vii, 77p. map. 23cm.

First English edition published 1893.

1. Stundists. I. Brown, John, 1830-1922.

CCSC/ef

A 15716